

Le contentes

8^o P. o. angl.

Theatre

431 ^w/₃

GESCHENK
FRESENIUS

<36601517290018



<36601517290018

Bayer. Staatsbibliothek

Bell's
BRITISH THEATRE;
TRAGEDIES.



L O N D O N
Printed for John Bell near Cocter Exchange in the
Strand and C. Etherington at York July 22^d 1776.

THE THREE

W. GEORGE





Roberts del.

Published for Bells Brigh Theatre July 8.th 1776.

Thornthwaite Sculp.

Mr. ROSS in the Character of ESSEX.

Essex: Am I not your General?

Was I not so by Virtue of this Staff?

1.
BELL'S EDITION.

THE
EARL of ESSEX;

A TRAGEDY, by HENRY JONES.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

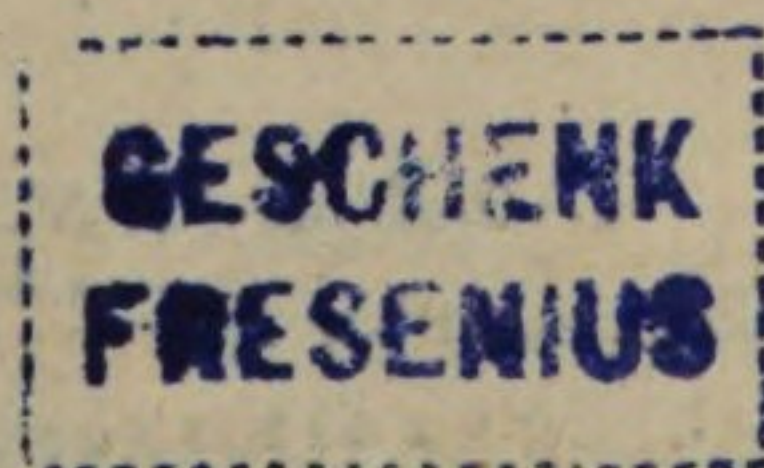
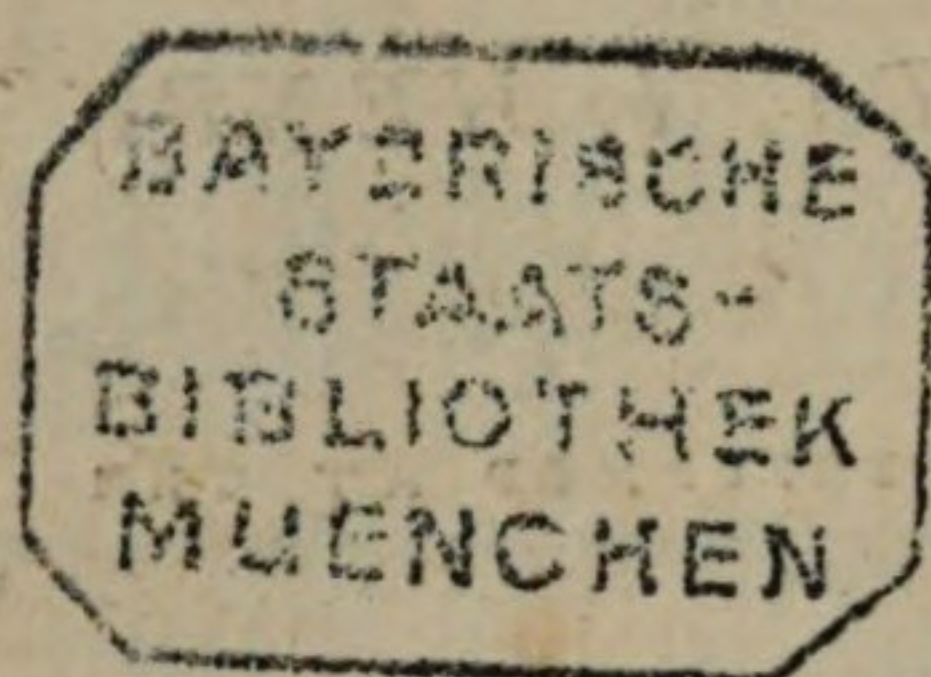
By Mr. WILD, Prompter.

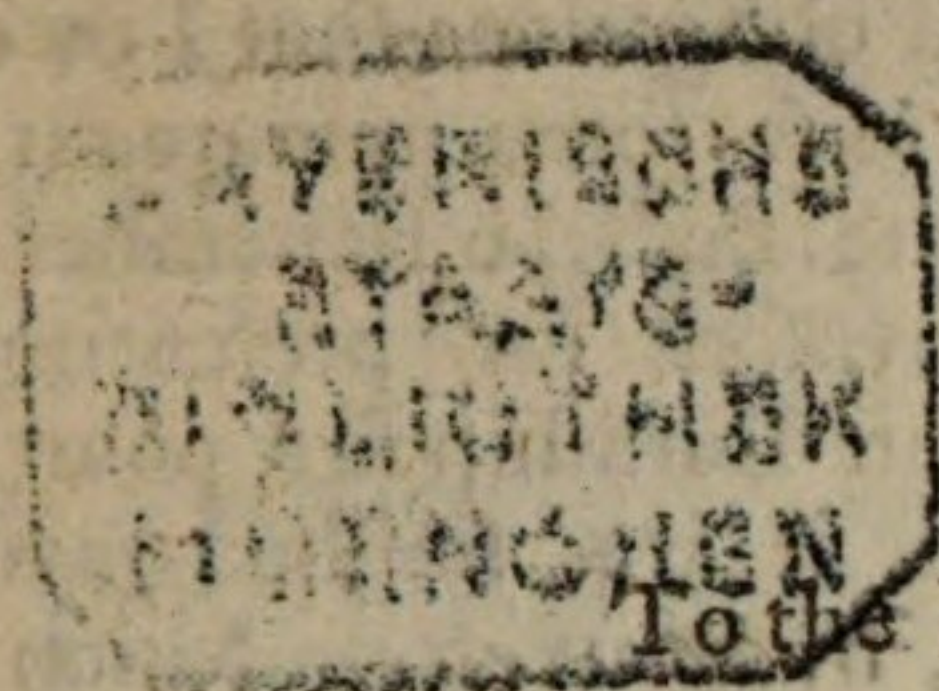


LONDON:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCLXXVI.





To the Right Honourable

P H I L I P,

EARL of CHESTERFIELD, &c.

Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter.

MY LORD,

THAT you may be induced to read this dedication through, I shall begin by assuring you, that I do not intend to pay you one compliment. To praise you is unnecessary on all hands; to your Lordship, it is offensive; and for the public, they do not want to be informed of your character: it lives, at present, in the mouths of all men, and posterity will find it in the history of Europe.

My design, my Lord, is to express my own gratitude, not to delineate your merit. 'Twas your Lordship first took notice of me, in my original obscurity, whence you brought me into life, and have since continued to encourage me by your countenance and favour; and I cannot help confessing, that I have a kind of honest pride in having it known, that your Lordship thought me worthy to be taken under your protection.

These, my Lord, are the general obligations that I owe you, of which I have wished to raise some monument, that may remain as long as my name shall be remembered ; but I have more particular reasons for presenting you with this tragedy, as it was your Lordship first pointed out to me the subject, and when it was finished gave me the first assurance of its success, by your approbation. I could not therefore avoid taking advantage of this opportunity, to acknowledge, publicly, all these favours ; and to assure you, that I am

Your Lordship's most obliged,

Most obedient, and

Very humble servant,

HENRY JONES.

To Mr. HENRY JONES, on his Tragedy of the
EARL of ESSEX.

AS antient heroes are renown'd in song,
For rescuing virtue from th' oppressor's wrong,
So shall thy fame, who snatch'd this well-wrought tale
From dullness' gloomy pow'r, o'er time prevail.

Long had these scenes, wound up with dext'rous art,
In spite of reason, gain'd upon the heart;
Thaw'd ev'ry frozen fountain of the eye,
We wept, 'till even Sorrow's self was dry;
Yet judgment scorn'd what passion had approv'd,
And the head wonder'd how the heart was mov'd.
But, with a fate revers'd, thy work shall boast,
That soundest judgments shall admire it most.
Cloath'd in the easy grandeur of thy lines,
The story brightens, as the diction shines.
Renew'd with vigour as in age 'tis grown,
The wond'ring scene fees beauties not its own.

Thus, worn with years, in Afric's sultry vales,
The crested snake shifts off his tarnish'd scales;
Assumes fresh beauties, brighter than the old,
Of changing colours, intermix'd with gold:
Reburnish'd, basks beneath the scorching ray,
Shines with new glories in the face of day,
Darts fiercer lightning from his brandish'd tongue,
Rolls more sublime, and seems, at least, more young.

No more shall noise, and wild, bombastic rage,
Usurp th' applauding thunder of the stage;
Fustian no more shall pass for true sublime,
Nor nonsense musically float in rhyme;
Nor, in a worse extreme, shall creeping prose,
For nature and simplicity, impose:
By thee reform'd, each vicious taste shall fail,
And critic Justice hold aloft her scale.

Whence beams this dazzling lustre on thy mind?
Whence this vast fund of knowledge in mankind,
Unletter'd genius? Whence hast thou been taught,
This dignity of stile, this majesty of thought;
This rapid fire, by cool correctness rul'd,
And every learned elegance, unschool'd?

Say, hath great Shakespeare's transmigrated shade
 Inform'd thy mass, or lent thee friendly aid?
 To him, blest'd bard, untaught, 'twas also giv'n,
 T' ascend, on native wings, invention's brightest Hea-
 ven,*

Assuming Phœbus' port; and in his train,
 The muses all, like handmaids, not in vain,
 Crouch for employment.—

The passions too, subservient to his will,
 Attentive wait on his superior skill;
 At the command of his enchanting art,
 Unlock the bursting flood-gates of the heart,
 And in the rapid, headlong stream, bear down
 The vanquish'd soul, and make it all his own.

Happy the clime, distinguish'd be the age,
 When genius shoots spontaneous for the stage;
 Not too luxuriant, nor too trimly neat,
 But, in loose wildness, negligently great.
 O may the gen'rous plants, so wond'rous rare,
 Ne'er want the tender hand of fost'ring care;
 But, like Apollo's fav'rite tree, be seen,
 For ever flourishing, for ever green.

M^r NAMARA MORGAN.

* Alluding to the prologue to Henry V.

P R O L O G U E.

OUR desp'rate bard a bold excursion tries,
 Tho' danger damp'd his wings, he dar'd to rise :
 From hope, high rais'd, all glorious actions spring ;
 'Tis hence that heroes conquer, poets sing.

Even he may feel the soul-exalting fire,
 Fame prompts the humblest bosom to aspire.

Without a guide this rash attempt he made,
 Without a clue from art, or learning's aid.
 He takes a theme where tend'rest passions glow,
 A theme, your grandsires felt with pleasing woe.
 Essex' sad tale he strives to cloath anew,
 And hopes to place it in a stronger view.

Poets, like painters, may, by equal law,
 The labour'd piece from different masters draw ;
 Perhaps improve the plan, add fire and grace,
 And strike th' impassion'd soul through all the face.
 How far our author has secur'd a claim
 To this exalted palm, this wish'd-for fame,
 Your generous sentiments will soon declare :
 Humanity is ever prone to spare.

'Twere baseness then your candour to distrust ;
 A British audience will, at least, be just.

A flattering truth he fearful must confess,
 His sanguine friends made promise of success ;
 But that, he fears, their ardent wishes wrought,
 Since partial favour seldom sees a fault.
 Then bear, like patient friends, this first essay,
 His next shall thank you in a nobler way.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

The Earl of <i>Essex</i>	— —	Mr. Clinch.
Earl of <i>Southampton</i>	— —	Mr. Wroughton.
Lord <i>Burleigh</i>	— —	Mr. Hull.
Sir <i>Walter Raleigh</i>	—	Mr. L'Estrange.
Lieutenant of the Tower		Mr. Thompson.

W O M E N.

Queen <i>Elizabeth</i>	—	Mrs. Melmoth.
Countess of <i>Rutland</i>	—	Mrs. Hartley.
Countess of <i>Nottingham</i>		Miss Sherman.

Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.

T H E

T H E
E A R L o f E S S E X.

A C T I.

SCENE, *an Antichamber in the Palace.*

Enter Burleigh and Raleigh.

BURLEIGH.

THE bill, at length, has pass'd opposing numbers,
Whilst crowds seditious clamour'd round the se-
nate,

And headlong faction urg'd its force within.

Ral. It has, my lord.—The wish'd-for day is come,
When this proud idol of the people's hearts
Shall now no more be worshipp'd.—*Essex falls.*

My lord, the minute's near that shall unravel
The mystic schemes of this aspiring man.

Now Fortune, with officious hand, invites us
To her, and opens wide the gates of greatness,
The way to power. My heart exults; I see,
I see, my lord, our utmost wish accomplish'd!

I see great Cecil shine without a rival,
And England blest him as her guardian saint.
Such potent instruments I have prepar'd,
As shall, with speed, o'erturn this hated man,
And dash him down, by proof invincible.

Bur. His day of glory now is set in night,
And all my anxious hopes, at last, are crown'd.
Those proofs against him, Raleigh—

Ral. All arrived.

Bur. Arrived! how? when?

Ral. This very hour, my lord:
Nay more, a person comes, of high distinction,

To

To prove some secret treaties made by Essex,
With Scotland's monarch, and the proud Tyrone.

Bur. How say'st ? to prove 'em ?

Ral. Ay, my lord, and back'd
With circumstances of a stronger nature.
It now appears, his secretary Cuff,
With Blunt and Lee, were deep concern'd in this
Destructive scheme, contriv'd to raise this lord,
And ruin Cecil. O, it is a subtle,
A deep laid mischief, by the earl contriv'd,
In hour malignant, to o'erturn the state,
And (horror to conceive !) dethrone the queen.

Bur. These gladfome tidings fly beyond my hopes !
The queen will listen now, will now believe,
And trust the counsel of her faithful Burleigh.
' Let this most lucky circumstance be kept
' A secret still from public observation.—'
Dispose 'em well, till kind occasion calls
Their office forth, lest prying craft mean while
May tamper with their thoughts, and change their minds :
Let them, like batteries conceal'd, appear
At once, both to surprize and to destroy.

Ral. This sudden shock, my lord, this weighty stroke,
Must press him headlong down to deep destruction :
Indignant Fate marks out this dreaded man,
And fortune now has left him.

Bur. Thank the changeling ;
His servile faction soon will stand aghast,
And sink, at distance, from his threat'ning fall.

Ral. His headstrong friend, the bold Southampton too,
Now finds his rash endeavours all defeated ;
And storms at thee and the impeaching commons.

Bur. Let him rave on, and rage.—The lion in
The toils entangled, wastes his strength, and roars
In vain ; his efforts but amuse me now.—

' *Ral.* What triumphs in my soul shall reign, to see
' This sanguine and o'erbearing man brought down
' Beneath my envy ; nay, below my scorn.
' How young ambition swells my rising hopes !
' 'Tis Heaven, O Cecil, calls thro' England's voice,
' And justice, bending from above, invites us.'

Enter

THE EARL OF ESSEX.

Enter Gentleman.

Gent. My lord, the lady Nottingham desires,
With much impatience, to attend your lordship.

Bur. What may the purport of her bus'ness be ?
Her tender wishes are to Essex ty'd
In love's soft fetters, and endearing bands :
' For him, each melting thought awakes desire,
' And all her soul is lavish'd on that lord,—
' This unexpected visit much surprizes me !
' What can it mean ? She would not come to pry
' And pick out tales for Essex' ear !—Why let her ;
' I'm arm'd secure against her arts and cunning.
' Besides, her errand comes too late ; for now
' Her minion's doom'd to fall.'—Conduct her in.

[*Exit Gent.*

And you, my Raleigh, watch Southampton's steps ;
With care observe each movement of his friends ;
That no advantage on that side be lost.

[*Exit Ral.*

' Southampton's Essex' second self ; he shares
' His headlong councils, and adopts his schemes ;
' His daring heart, and bold, ungovern'd tongue,
' Are both enlisted in the rash designs
' Of this proud lord, nor knows a will but his :
' A limb so fix'd must with the body fall.'

Enter Lady Nottingham.

Not. Thrice hail to rescu'd England's guiding genius !
His country's guardian, and his queen's defence.
Great Burleigh, thou whose patriot bosom beats
With Albion's glory and Eliza's fame ;
Who shield'st her person, and support'st her throne ;
For thee, what fervent thanks, what offer'd vows,
Do prostrate millions pay !

Bur. Bright excellence,
This fair applause too highly over-rates,
Too much extols, the low deserts of Cecil.

Not. What praises are too high for patriot-worth ;
Or what applause exceeds the price of virtue ?
My lord, conviction has at last subdu'd me,
And I am honour's proselyte :—too long
My erring heart pursued the ways of faction ;
I own myself t' have been your bitt'rest foe,

And join'd with Essex in each foul attempt
To blast your honour, and traduce your fame.

Bur. Tho' ne'er my wishing heart could call you friend,
Yet honour and esteem I always bore you;
And never meant, but with respect to serve you.

' It grieves me, madam, to have thus offended,
' Where most my wishes labour'd to oblige.

' *Not.* I know your honour and your virtues well;
' Your public plans, design'd for England's good,
' And all your private merit's weight. But, Oh,
' How blind is reason in the maze of passion!
' I sought your ruin, labour'd for your fall.
' But, if repentance may atone for guilt,
' Or self-reproach for sharpest penance pass,
' No mortal breast e'er felt more woe than mine,
' And Burleigh now may rank me for his friend.

' *Bur.* That such a worth of soul should be abus'd?
' Could I accuse my heart but of a thought
' To do you wrong; if any purpose ever
' Against your welfare in my soul arose,
' That look'd with malice on your shining merit,
' Your matchless beauty, or your brighter virtues
' Then let me live despis'd, a proverb made
' To ev'ry passing slave; nay more, the scorn
' And trampled footstool of the man I hate.'

Not. It is enough, my lord, I know it well,
And feel rekindling virtue warm my breast;
Honour and gratitude their force resume
Within my heart, and every wish is yours.
O Cecil, Cecil, what a foe hast thou,
A deadly foe, whilst hated Essex lives!

Bur. I know it well, but can assign no cause.

Not. Ambition's restless hand has wound his thoughts
Too high for England's welfare; nay, the queen
Scarce sits in safety on her throne, while he,
Th' audacious Essex, freely treads at large,
And breathes the common air. Ambition is
The only god he serves, to whom he'd sacrifice
His honour, country, friends, and every tie
Of truth, and bond of nature; nay, his love.

Bur. ' I find this bus'ness work as I would have it.

' [*Aside.*]
The

The man that in his public duty fails,
 On private virtue will disdainful tread,
 As steps to raise him to some higher purpose:
 In vain each softer wish would plead with him,
 No tender movement in his soul prevails,
 And mighty love, who rules all nature else,
 Must follow here in proud ambition's train.

Not. Pronounce it not, my soul abhors the sound,
 Like death.—Oh, Cecil, will you kindly lend
 Some pity to a wretch like me?

Bur. Command,
 Madam; my power and will are yours. ‘I feel
 ‘Your wrongs, I feel the base returns you’ve met
 ‘From this ungrateful and disloyal man,
 ‘Tho’ oft your goodness screen’d him from reproof.
 ‘Believe me worthy to partake your grievance,
 ‘Accept my service, and employ my power.’

Not. Will Cecil’s friendly ear vouchsafe to bend
 Its great attention to a woman’s wrongs,
 Whose pride and shame, resentment and despair,
 Rise up in raging anarchy at once,
 To tear with ceaseless pangs my tortur’d soul?
 Words are unequal to the woes I feel,
 And language lessens what my heart endures.
 Passion repuls’d with scorn, and proud disdain,
 Recoils indignant on my shrinking soul,
 Beats back my vital springs, and crushes life.

Bur. Madam, your wrongs, I must confess, are great;
 Yet still, I fear, you know not half his falshood.
 ‘Who, that had eyes to look on beauty; who,
 ‘That had a heart to feel that beauty’s power;
 Who, but the false, perfidious Essex, could
 Prefer to Nottingham a Rutland’s charms?
 Start not—By heav’n, I tell you nought but truth,
 What I can prove, past doubt; that he receiv’d
 The lady Rutland’s hand, in sacred wedlock,
 The very night before his setting out
 For Ireland.

Not. Oh, may quick destruction seize ’em!
 May furies blast, and hell destroy their peace!
 May all their nights——

Bur. I pray, have patience, Madam,

Restrain a while your rage ; curses are vain.
 But there's a surer method to destroy him ;
 And if you'll join with me, 'tis done : he falls.

Not. Ha ! say'st thou, Burleigh ! Speak, my genius,
 speak ;

Be quick as vengeance' self to tell me how.

Bur. You must have heard the commons have im-
 peach'd him,

And we have proofs sufficient for his ruin.

But the queen—you know how fair he stands
 In her esteem ; and Rutland too, his wife,
 Hath full possession of the royal ear.

What then avail impeachments, or the law's
 Severest condemnation, while the queen
 May snatch him from the uplifted hand of justice ?

Here then, my Nottingham, begins thy task :

Try ev'ry art t' incense the queen against him,

Then step between her and the lady Rutland,

' Let not her fondness find the least access

' To the queen's heart to counterwork our purpose.'

Observe Southampton too, with jealous eye ;

Prevent, as much as possible, his suit :

For well I know he will not fail to try

His eloquence on the behalf of Essex.

Not. It shall be done ; his doom is fix'd ; he dies.

Oh, 'twas a precious thought ! I never knew

Such heart-felt satisfaction ! Essex dies,

And Rutland, in her turn, shall learn to weep.

The time is precious ; I'll about it strait.

Come, vengeance, come, assist me now to breathe

Thy venom'd spirit in the royal ear.

[*Exit* Nottingham.

Bur. There spoke the very genius of the sex.

A disappointed woman sets no bounds

To her revenge. Her temper's form'd to serve me.

Enter Raleigh.

Ral. The lord Southampton, with ungovern'd rage,
 Resents aloud his disappointed measures.

I met him in the outward court ; he seeks

In haste your lordship, and, forgetting forms,

Pursues me hither, and demands to see you.

Bur. Raleigh, 'tis well--Withdraw--Attend the queen.

Leave me to deal with this o'erbearing man. [*Exit* Ral.

Enter

Enter Southampton.

South. Where is the man, whom virtue calls her friend?
I give you joy, my lord!—Your quenchless fury
At length prevails,—and now your malice triumphs.
You've hunted honour to the toil of faction,
And view his struggles with malicious joy.

Bur. What means, my lord?

South. Oh, fraud! shall valiant Essex
Be made a sacrifice to your ambition!
Oh, it smells foul indeed, of rankest malice,
And the vile statesman's craft. You dare not sure
Thus bid defiance to each shew of worth,
Each claim of honour: dare not injure thus
Your suffering country in her bravest son!

Bur. But why should stern reproach her angry brow
Let fall on me? Am I alone the cause
That gives this working humour strength? Do I
Instruct the public voice to warp his actions?
Justice, untaught, shall poize th' impartial scales,
And every curious eye may mark the beam.

South. The specious shield, which private malice bears,
Is ever blazon'd with some public good;
Behind that artful fence, sculk low, conceal'd
The bloody purpose, and the poison'd shaft;
Ambition there, and envy nestle close;
From thence, they take their fatal aim unseen;
And honest merit is the destin'd mark.

Bur. ' Your warm distemper'd zeal puts rashly by
' The cool directing hand of wholesome reason.
' No imputation foul shall rest on me;
' My honest purposes defy aloud
' The slander-spreading tongue of busy faction,
' To cast its venom on my fair report,
' Or tell posterity, thus Cecil did.'
My country's welfare, and my queen's command,
Have ever been my guiding stars through life,
My sure direction still.—To these I now
Appeal;—from these, no doubt, this lord's misconduct
Hath widely stray'd; and reason, not reviling,
Must now befriend his cause.

South. How ill had Providence

Dispos'd the suffering world's oppress'd affairs
 Had sacred right's eternal rule been left
 To crafty politicians' partial sway !
 Then power and pride would stretch th' enormous grasp,
 And call their arbitrary portion, justice :
 Ambition's arm, by av'rice urg'd, would pluck
 The core of honesty from virtue's heart,
 And plant deceit and rancour in its stead :
 Falsehood would trample then on truth and honour,
 And envy poison sweet benevolence.
 Oh, 'tis a goodly group of attributes,
 And well befits some statesman's righteous rule !
 Out, out upon such base and bloody doings !
 The term of being is not worth the sin ;
 No human bosom can endure its dart.
 Then put this cruel purpose from thee far,
 Nor let the blood of Essex overwhelm thy soul.

Bur. 'Tis well, my lord ! your words no comment need ;

' No doubt, they've well explain'd your honest meaning ;
 ' 'Tis clear and full.—To parts, like yours, discretion
 ' Wou'd be a clog, and caution but incumbrance.'
 Yet mark me well, my lord, the clinging ivy
 With th' oak may rise, but with it too must fall.

South. Thy empty threats, ambitious man, hurt not
 The breast of truth. Fair innocence, and faith,
 Those strangers to thy practis'd heart, shall shield
 My honour, and preserve my friend.—In vain,
 Thy malice, with unequal arm, shall strive
 To tear th' applauded wreath from Essex' brow ;
 His honest laurel, held aloft by fame,
 ' Above thy blasting reach, shall safely flourish,'
 Shall bloom immortal to the latest times :
 Whilst thou, amidst thy tangling snares involv'd,
 Shalt sink confounded, and unpitied fall.

Bur. Rail on, proud lord, and give thy choler vent :
 It wastes itself in vain ; the queen shall judge
 Between us in this warm debate. To her
 I now repair ; and in her royal presence
 You may approve your innocence and faith.
 Perhaps you'll meet me there.—Till then, farewell.

[Exit.
South.

South. Confusion wait thy steps, thou cruel monster !
 My noble and illustrious friend betray'd,
 By crafty faction and tyrannic power,
 His sinking trophies, and his falling fame,
 Oppress my very soul. I'll to the queen,
 Lay all their envy open to her view,
 Confront their malice, and preserve my friend. [Exit.

The Queen discovered, sitting on her throne.

Raleigh, Lords, and Attendants.

Q. Without consulting me ! presumptuous man !
 Who governs here ?—What ! am not I your queen ?
 You dar'd not, were he present, take this step.

Ral. Dread sovereign, your ever faithful commons
 Have, in their gratitude and love for you,
 Preferr'd this salutary bill against him.

Enter Burleigh.

Q. You, my lord Burleigh, must have known of this.
 The commons here impeach the earl of Essex
 Of practising against the state and me.
 Methinks I might be trusted with the secret.
 Speak, for I know it well, 'twas thy contrivance.
 Ha ! was it not ? You dare not say it was not.

Bur. I own my judgment did concur with theirs.
 His crimes, I fear, will justify the charge,
 And vindicate their loyalty and mine.

Q. Ha ! tell not me your smooth, deceitful story !
 I know your projects, and your close cabals.
 You'd turn my favour into party feuds,
 And use my scepter as the rod of faction :
 But Henry's daughter claims a nobler soul.
 I'll nurse no party, but will reign o'er all,
 And my sole rule shall be to bless my people :
 Who serves them best has still my highest favour :
 This Essex ever did.

Enter Southampton.

Behold, Southampton,
 What a base portrait's here ! The faithful Essex
 Here drawn at large associating with rebels,
 To spoil his country and dethrone his queen.

South. It is not like.—By Heav'n the hand of envy
 Drew these false lines, distorted far from truth
 And honour, and unlike my noble friend

18 THE EARL OF ESSEX.

As light to shade, or hell to highest heav'n.
Then suffer not, thou best of queens, this lord,
This valiant lord, to fall a sacrifice
To treachery and base designs; who now
Engages death in all his horrid shapes,
Amidst a hardy race, inur'd to danger;
But let him face to face, this charge encounter,
And every falsehood, like his foes, shall fly.

2. To me you seem to recommend strict justice,
In all her pomp of power. But are you sure
No subtle vice conceal'd assumes her garb?
Take heed, that malice does not wear the mask,
Nor envy deck her in the borrow'd guise.
Rancour has often darken'd reason's eye,
'And judgment winks, when passion holds the scale.'
Impeach the very man to whom I owe
My brightest rays of glory! Look to it, lords,
Take care, be cautious on what ground you tread;
Let honest means alone secure your footing.
Raleigh and you withdraw, and wait our leisure.

[*Exeunt Raleigh and South.*]

Lord Burleigh, stay; we must with you have farther
Conf'rence.—I see this base contrivance plain.
Your jealousy and pride, your envy of
His shining merit, brought this bill to light.
But mark me, as you prize our high regard
And favour, I command you to suppress it:
Let not our name and power be embarrass'd
In your perplexing schemes. 'Twas you began,
And therefore you must end it.

Bur. I obey.

Yet humbly would intreat you to consider
How new, unpopular, this step must be,
To stand between your parliament's enquiry
And this offending lord.—We have such proofs—

2. Reserve your proofs to a more proper season,
And let them then appear. But once again
We charge you, on your duty and allegiance,
To stop this vile proceeding; and to wait
Till Essex can defend himself in person.
If then your accusations are of force,
The laws, and my consent, no doubt, are open.

He

He has my strict command, with menace mix'd,
To end effectually this hated war,
Ere he presume to quit the Irish coast.

Bur. Madam, my duty now compels me to—

2. No more! see that my orders be obey'd. [*Ex. Bur.*
Essex a traitor!—it can never be—
His grateful and his honest soul disdains it.—
I know him hot, ambitious, rash, impatient;
But then he's firmly anchor'd in his duty:
Tho' stormy passions toss him to and fro.
Can he prove false? so high advanc'd, so honour'd,
So near my favour—and—I fear, so near
My heart!—Impossible.—This Burleigh hates him,
And, his rival, therefore would destroy him,
But he shall find his narrow schemes defeated.
In vain their fraudulent efforts shall combine
To shake my settled soul, my firm design;
Resolv'd to lift bright virtue's palm on high,
Support her grandeur, and her foes defy. [*Exit.*

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

Enter Burleigh and Raleigh.

BURLEIGH.

ESSEX arriv'd! Confusion to my hopes!
His presence will destroy me with the queen.
I much suspect he had some private notice,
Perhaps, a punctual order, to return.
He lurks too near her heart.—What's to be done?
' Prepare the witnesses with speed; apprise
' The lady Nottingham.—Southampton's pride,
' And Rutland's too, will lift the crest again.
' But fly, my Raleigh, send me Nottingham.

[*Exit Raleigh.*

' We must alarm the queen with new commotions
' In many parts of her dominions rais'd:
' All this, and more, must now be pass'd for truth.
' This sudden blow has struck me to the soul;
' 'Tis gone too far, he dies—proud Essex now,
' Or Cecil falls.' Now is th' important crisis—

Keep

Keep up thy usual strength ; my better genius,
Direct my steps to crush my mortal foe.

Enter Queen and Raleigh.

Q. It cannot be ! Return'd without my leave !
Against my strict command !—Impossible ;

Ral. Madam, the earl is now at court, and begs
An audience of your majesty.

Q. Amazing !
What ! break his trust ! desert his high command !
Forfake his post, and disobey his queen !
'Tis false—invented all.—You wish it so.

Bur. Madam, I wish some other rumours false :
Reports, I fear, of great concern to you.

Q. What rumours ? what reports ? Your frown wou'd
much

Denote : your preface seems important.—Speak.

Bur. Some new commotions are of late sprung up
In Ireland, where the west is all in arms,
And moves with hasty march to join Tyrone,
And all his northern clans. A dreadful power !
Nay more, we have advices from the borders
Of sudden risings, near the banks of Tweed !
'Tis thought, to favour an attempt from Scotland.
Mean while, Tyrone embarks six thousand men
To land at Milford, and march where Essex
Shall join them with his friends.

Q. In league with James !
And plotting with Tyrone ! It cannot be.
His very pride disdains such perfidy.
But is not Essex here without my leave !
Against my strict command ! that, that's rebellion.
The rest, if true, or false, it matters not.
What's to be done ?—admit him to my presence ?
No, no—my dignity, my pride forbid it.
Ungrateful man, approach me not ; rise, rise,
Resentment, and support my soul ! Disdain,
Do thou assist me.—Yes, it shall be so.

Bur. I see she muses deep ; her mind works upwards,
And paints its struggling efforts in her face.
Tyrone's invasion wakes her fear and anger,
And all her soul is one continued storm.

Q. For once my pride shall stoop ; and I will see

This rash, audacious, this once favour'd man;
But treat him as his daring crimes deserve.

Enter Southampton.

South. [*kneeling.*] Permit me, Madam, to approach you
thus;

Thus lowly to present the humble suit
Of the much injur'd, faithful, earl of Essex,
Who dares not, unpermitted, meet your presence.
He begs, most gracious queen, to fall before
Your royal feet, to clear him to his sovereign,
Whom, next to heav'n, he wishes most to please.
Let faction load him with her labouring hand,
His innocence shall rise against the weight,
If but his gracious mistress deign to smile.

2. Let him appear.

[*Exit South.*]

Now to thy trying task,
My soul! Put forth, exert thy utmost strength,
Nor let an injur'd queen be tame.—Lie still,
My heart! I cannot listen to thee now.

Enter Essex and Southampton.

Essex. Forgive, thou injur'd Majesty, thou best
Of queens, this seeming disobedience. See,
I bend submissive in your royal presence,
With soul as penitent, as if before
Th' all-searching eye of heav'n. But, Oh, that frown!
My queen's resentment wounds my inmost spirit,
Strikes me like death, and pierces through my heart.

2. You have obey'd, my lord! you've serv'd me well!
My deadly foes are quell'd! and you come home
A conqueror! Your country bids you welcome!
And I, your queen, applaud!—Triumphant man!
What! is it thus that Essex gains his laurels?
What! is it thus you've borne my high commission?
How durst you disregard your trusted duty,
Desert your province, and betray your queen?

Essex. I came to clear my injur'd name from guilt,
Imputed guilt, and slanderous accusations.
My shame was wafted in each passing gale,
Each swelling tide came loaded with my wrongs;
And echo sounded forth, from faction's voice,
The traitor Essex.—Was't not hard, my queen,
That while I stood in danger's dreadful front,

Encountering death in every shape of terror,
 And bleeding for my country?—Was't not hard,
 My mortal enemies at home, like cowards,
 Shou'd in my absence basely blast my fame?

2. It is the godlike attribute of kings
 To raise the virtuous and protect the brave.
 I was the guardian of your reputation,
 What malice, or what faction then cou'd reach you?
 My honour was expos'd, engag'd for yours:
 But you found reason to dislike my care,
 And to yourself assum'd the wrested office.

Essex. If ought disloyal in this bosom dwells,
 If ought of treason lodges in this heart,
 May I to guilt and lasting shame be wedded,
 The sport of faction, and the mark of scorn,
 The world's derision, and my queen's abhorrence.
 Stand forth the villain, whose invenom'd tongue
 Would taint my honour and traduce my name,
 Or stamp my conduct with a rebel's brand!
 Lives there a monster in the haunts of men,
 Dares tear my trophies from their pillar'd base,
 Eclipse my glory and disgrace my deeds?

2. This ardent language, and this glow of soul,
 Were nobly graceful in a better cause;
 Where virtue warrants, and where truth inspires:
 But injur'd truth, with brow invincible,
 Frowns stern reproof upon the false assertion,
 And contradicts it with the force of facts.
 From me you have appeal'd, ungrateful man;
 The laws, not I, must listen to your plea.
 Go, stand the test severe, abide the trial,
 And mourn too late the bounty you abus'd.

[*Exeunt Queen, Southampton, &c.*]

Essex. Is this the just requital, then, of all
 My patriot-toils and oft-encounter'd perils,
 Amidst th' inclemencies of camps and climes?
 Then be it so.—Unmov'd and dauntless, let me
 This shock of adverse fortune firmly stand.
 But yet, methinks, 'tis somewhat sudden too!
 My greatness, now depriv'd of each support,
 Which bore so long its envy'd weight aloft,
 Must quick to ruin fall, and crush my hopes.

Enter

Enter Southampton.

South. Alas, my lord! the queen's displeasure kindles
With warmth increasing; whilst lord Burleigh labours
T' inflame her wrath, and make it still burn fiercer.

Essex. I scorn the blaze of courts, the pomp of kings;
I give them to the winds, and lighter vanity;
Too long they've robb'd me of substantial bliss,
Of solid happiness, and true enjoyments.
But lead me to my mourning love; alas!
She sinks beneath oppressing ills; she fades,
She dies for my afflicting pangs, and seeks
Me, sorrowing, in the walks of woe.—Distraction!
Oh, lead me to her, to my soul's desire.

South. Let caution guide you in this dangerous step.
Consider well, my lord, the consequence—
For should the queen (forbid it Heaven!) discover
Your private loves, your plighted hands, no power
On earth could step between you and destruction.
' Lock up this secret from the prying world.'

Enter Burleigh.

Bur. My lord of Essex, 'tis the queen's command,
That you forthwith resign your staff of office;
And further, she confines you to your palace.

Essex. Welcome, my fate. Let fortune do her utmost;
I know the worst, and will confront her malice,
And bravely bear the unexpected blow.

Bur. The queen, my lord, demands your quick compliance.

Essex. Go, then, thou gladsome messenger of ill,
And, joyful, feast thy fierce rapacious soul
With Essex' sudden and accomplish'd fall.
The trampled corse of all his envy'd greatness,
Lies prostrate now beneath thy savage feet;
But still th' exalted spirit mounts above thee.
Go, tell the queen thy own detested story:
Full in her sight disclose the snaky labyrinths
And lurking snares you plant in virtue's path,
To catch integrity's unguarded step.

Bur. How ill repaid are public toils and cares,
' Where active honesty, with station join'd,
' Incurs but calumny, and foul reproach!'
Your country has impeach'd, your queen accus'd you;

To these address your best defence, and clear
Your question'd conduct from disloyal guilt.
What answer to the queen shall I return?

Essex. My staff of office I from her receiv'd,
And will to her, and her alone, resign it.

Bur. This bold refusal will incense the queen.
This arrogance will make your guilt the stronger.

[*Exit.*

South. Sustain, my noble friend, thy wonted greatness;
Collect thy fortitude, and summon all
Thy soul, to bear with strength this crushing weight,
Which falls severe upon thee; whilst my friendship
Shall lend a helping hand, and share the burthen.
I'll hence with speed, and to the queen repair,
And all the power of warmest words employ,
To gain you yet one audience more, and bring
Her majesty to milder thoughts. Farewel. [*Exit.*

Essex. As newly wak'd from all my dreams of glory,
Those gilded visions of deceitful joys,
I stand confounded at the unlook'd-for change,
And scarcely feel this thunder-bolt of fate.
The painted clouds, which bore my hopes aloft,
Alas, are now vanish'd to yielding air,
And I am fall'n indeed! —

How weak is reason, when affection pleads!
How hard to turn the fond, deluded heart
From flatt'ring toys, which sooth'd its vanity!
The laurell'd trophy, and the loud applause,
The victor's triumph, and the people's gaze;
The high-hung banner, and recording gold,
Subdue me still, still cling around my heart,
And pull my reason down.

Enter Rutland.

Rnt. Oh, let me fly
To clasp, embrace, the lord of my desires!
My soul's delight, my utmost joy, my husband!
I feel once more his panting bosom beat;
Once more I hold him in my eager arms,
Behold his face, and lose my soul in rapture.

Essex. Transporting bliss! my richest, dearest treasure!
My mourning turtle, my long absent peace,
Oh, come yet nearer, nearer to my heart!

My

My raptur'd soul springs forward to receive thee:
Thou Heav'n on earth, thou balm of all my woe!

Rut. O, shall I credit then each ravish'd sense;
Has pitying Heav'n consented to my prayer?
It has, it has; my Essex is return'd!

But language poorly speaks the joys I feel;
Let passion paint, and looks express my soul.

Essex. With thee, my sweetest comfort, I'll retire
From splendid palaces, and glitt'ring throngs,
To live embosom'd in the shades of joy,
Where sweet content extends her friendly arms,
And gives encreasing love a lasting welcome.
With thee I'll timely fly from proud oppression,
Forget our sorrows, and be blest'd for ever.

Rut. O, let us hence, beyond the reach of power;
Where fortune's hand shall never part us more.
In this calm state of innocence and joy,
I'll press thee to my throbbing bosom close.
Ambition's voice shall call in vain; the world,
The thankless world, shall never claim thee more,
And all thy business shall be love and me.

Essex. The queen, incens'd at my return, abandons me
To Cecil's malice, and the rage of faction.
I'm now no more the fav'rite child of fortune:
My enemies have caught me in the toil,
And life has nothing worth my wish, but thee.

Rut. Delusive dream of fancied happiness!
And has my fatal fondness then destroy'd thee?
Oh, have I lur'd thee to the deadly snare
Thy cruel foes have laid? 'Oh, have I put
'Thy life in peril? My officious tears
'Would needs inform thee of their wicked schemes.'
I dreaded Cecil's malice, and my heart,
Longing to see thee, with impatience listen'd
To its own alarms; and prudence sunk beneath
The force of love.

Essex. Forbear, my only comfort;
Oh, tell me not of danger, death, and Burleigh;
Let every star shed down its mortal bane
On my unshelter'd head: whilst thus I fold
Thee in my raptur'd arms; I'll brave 'em all
Defy my fate, and meet its utmost rigour.

Rut. Alas, my lord ! consider where we are.
Oh ! 'tis the queen's apartment ; death is here.

' I came to thee through peril's ambush'd path,
' And every danger risk'd for thy embrace.'

Each precious moment is by fate beset,
And time stands trembling whilst we thus confer.

Essex. Then, let us hence from this detested place ;
My rescu'd soul disdains the house of greatness,
Where humble honesty can find no shelter.

From hence we'll fly, where love and virtue call ;
Where happiness invites — that wish of all :

With sweet content enjoy each blissful hour,
Beyond the smiles of fraud, or frowns of power.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Enter Burleigh and Nottingham.

NOTTINGHAM.

MY lord, I've sought you out, with much impatience.

You've had an audience of the queen : what follow'd ?

Bur. Soon as I told her Essex had refus'd
To yield his dignities, and staff of office,

' Against her high command, pronounc'd by me,'
She seem'd depriv'd of reason for a moment ;

Her working mind betray'd contending passions,
Which, in her alter'd face, appear'd by turns.

She paus'd, like thunder in some kindling cloud,
The instant burst with dreadful fury forth :

' And has th' ungrateful wretch defy'd my mandate ?

' The proud, audacious traitor scorn'd my power ?

' He dares not, sure.—He dies—the villain dies ?

' Then, sudden, soften'd into milder sounds,

' And call'd him rash, unhappy, gallant Essex !

' On me her fury fell ; my crafty plans

' Against his reputation, fame, and life,

' Had driven him to extremes—my malice did it—

' My envy was his bane ; with all that passion

' Or fury could suggest.—I begg'd to know

' Her

' Her royal will concerning Essex ; urg'd
 ' Again his insolence.—Amaz'd, a while
 ' She stood, and wist not what to do.—At length,
 ' Collecting all her mind, these words she utter'd :—
 Let him to the Tow'r.—I instantly withdrew,
 But soon was countermanded, and desir'd
 To bring the earl of Essex to her presence.
 I like it not, and much I fear, she'll stand
 Between this high offender and the laws.

Not. Is Essex then secur'd ?

Bur. Madam, he is ;

And now comes guarded to the court.

Enter Gentleman.

Gent. Madam, the queen
 Is in her closet, and desires to see you.

[*Exit.*

Not. I attend her.

Bur. She wants, no doubt, to be advis'd by you.
 Improve this fair occasion, urge it home ;

' She must be quick'ned by repeated strokes
 ' Of fresh indignities, by Essex offer'd
 ' T' her royal person, and prerogative.
 ' Be circumspect and cautious ! mark her well.

Not. I know her foible. Essex long has had
 An interest in her heart, which nothing can
 O'erturn, except his own ungovern'd spirit.
 It is, indeed, the instrument by which
 We work, and cannot fail, if rightly us'd.

Bur. Madam, the queen expects you instantly.
 I must withdraw, and wait the earl's arrival. [*Exeunt.*

Queen discovered.

Queen. Ill-fated, wretched man ! perverse and obstinate !
 He counterworks my grace, and courts destruction.
 He gives his deadly foes the dagger to
 Destroy him, and defeats my friendly purpose,
 Which would, by seeming to abandon, save him.
 Nor will he keep the mask of prudence on
 A moment's space.—What ! must I bear this scorn ?
 No : let me all the monarch reassume ;
 Exert my power, and be myself again.—
 Oh, ill-performing, disobedient heart !—
 Why shrink'st thou, fearful, from thy own resolve ?

Enter Nottingham.

Thou com'st in time ; I'm much disturb'd, abus'd,
My Nottingham, and wou'd complain to thee
Of insolence, neglect, and high contempt.

Essex presum'd to dictate laws within
My palace gates. How say'st thou, Nottingham ?

Not. Surely, my gracious queen, it cannot be !
His heat and passion never cou'd impel him
To take so bold a step, to such rash guilt :
Methinks his very honour should prevent it.

Queen. Thy open, honest mind untutor'd seems
In life's ungrateful and degenerate school ;
Where stubborn vice in every form appears,
Mocking correction's ineffectual rod.

It is, indeed, an evil hard to bear ;
This haughty man has wanton'd with my grace,
Abus'd my bounty, and despis'd my favours.

' That giving goodness should profusely flow
' T'enrich the furly glebe, where only thorns
' And noxious weeds will spring !'

Resentment, then, shall in her turn prevail ;
To angry laws I'll give this victim up.

Not. His conduct has, I fear, been too unguarded :
His hasty temper knows not where to stop.
Ambition is the spur of all his actions,
Which often drives him o'er his duty's limits ;
(At least his enemies would have it so.)
But malice, Madam, seldom judges right.

Queen. Oh, Nottingham ! his pride is past enduring ;
This insolent, audacious man forgets
His honour and allegiance ;— and refus'd
To render up his staff of office, here,
Beneath my very eye.

Not. Presumptuous man !
Your faithful subjects will resent this pride,
This insolence, this treason to their queen ;
They must, my gracious sovereign.—'Tis not safe
To shield him longer from their just resentment.
Then give him up to justice and the laws.

Queen. You seem well pleas'd to urge severity.—
Offended majesty but seldom wants
Such sharp advisers.—Yet no attribute

So well befits th' exalted seat supreme,
 And power's disposing hand, as clemency.
 Each crime must from its quality be judg'd;
 And pity there shou'd interpose, where malice
 Is not th' aggressor. Hence! I'll hear no more.

Not. Madam, my sentiments were well intended;
 Justice, not malice, mov'd my honest zeal.
 My words were echos of the public voice,
 Which daily rises, with repeated cries
 Of high complaint, against this haughty lord.
 I pity, from my heart, his rash attempts,
 And much esteem the man.

Queen. Go, Nottingham,
 My mind's disturb'd, and send me Rutland hither.

[*Exit Not.*]

O, vain distinction of exalted state!
 No rank ascends above the reach of care,
 Nor dignity can shield a queen from woe.
 Despotic nature's stronger sceptre rules,
 And pain and passion in her right prevail.
 Oh, the unpity'd lot, severe condition,
 Of solitary, sad, dejected grandeur!
 Alone condemn'd to bear th' unsocial throb
 Of heart-felt anguish, and corroding grief;
 Depriv'd of what, within his homely shed,
 The poorest peasant in affliction finds,
 The kind, condoling comfort of a dear
 Partaking friend.—

Enter Countess of Rutland.

Rutland, I want thy timely
 Counsel. I'm importun'd, and urg'd to punish—
 But justice, sometimes, has a cruel sound,
 'Where mercy may with prudence meet, and both
 'Agree to soften rigour.'—Essex has,
 No doubt, provok'd my anger, and the laws;
 His haughty conduct calls for sharp reproof,
 And just correction. Yet I think him guiltless
 Of studied treasons, or design'd rebellion.
 Then, tell me, Rutland, what the world reports,
 What censure says of his unruly deeds.

Rut. The world, with envy's eye beholds his merit:
 Madam, 'tis malice all, and false report.

I know his noble heart, 'tis fill'd with honour :
 No trait'rous taint has touch'd his generous soul ;
 His grateful mind still glows with pure affection ;
 And all his thoughts are loyalty and you.

Queen. I grant you, Rutland, all you say, and think
 The earl possess'd of many splendid virtues.
 What pity 'tis, he should afford his foes
 Such frequent, sad occasions to undo him !

Rut. What human heart can, unafflicted, bear
 Such manly merit in distress : 'such worth
 ' Betray'd ; such valour in the toil,' beset
 By cruel foes, and faction's savage cry ?
 My good, my gracious mistress, stretch, betimes,
 Your saving arm, and snatch him from destruction,
 From deadly malice, treachery, and Cecil.
 O, let him live, to clear his conduct up !
 My gracious queen, he'll nobly earn your bounty,
 And with his dearest blood deserve your mercy.

Queen. Her words betray a warm, unusual fervour ;
 Mere friendship never could inspire this transport. [*Aside.*
 I never doubted but the earl was brave ;
 His life and valiant actions all declare it :
 I think him honest too, but rash and headstrong.
 I gladly would preserve him from his foes,
 And therefore am resolv'd once more to see him.

Rut. Oh, 'tis a godlike thought, and Heav'n itself
 Inspires it. Sure some angel moves your heart,
 Your royal heart, to pity and forgiveness.
 This gracious deed shall shine in future story,
 And deck your annals with the brightest virtue ;
 Posterity shall praise the princely act,
 And ages yet to come record your goodness.

Queen. I'll hear no more—Must I then learn from you
 To know my province, and be taught to move,
 As each designing mind directs ?—Leave me.

Rut. Her frowns are dreadful, and her eye looks terror.
 I tremble for my Essex. Save him, Heav'n ! [*Exit.*

Queen. Her warmth has touch'd me home. My jealous
 My fearful and suspicious soul's alarm'd. [*heart,*

Enter Burleigh, Raleigh, and others.

Bur. The earl of Essex waits your royal will. [*port*

Queen. Let him approach—And now, once more, sup-
 Thy

Thy dignity, my soul ; nor yield thy greatness
To strong usurping passion—But, he comes.

Enter Essex, Southampton, guards.

Essex. Permitted thus to bend, with prostrate heart,
[*Kneels.*

Before your sacred majesty ; I come,
With every grateful sense of royal favour,
Deeply engrav'd within my conscious soul.

Queen. I sent my orders for your staff of office.

Essex. Madam, my envy'd dignities and honours,
I first from your own royal hand receiv'd ;
And therefore justly held it far beneath me
To yield my trophies, and exalted power,
So dearly purchas'd in the field of glory,
To hands unworthy. No, my gracious queen,
I meant to lay them at your royal feet ;
Where life itself a willing victim falls,
If you command.

Queen. High swelling words, my lord, but ill supply
The place of deeds, and duty's just demand.
In danger's onset, and the day of trial,
Conviction still on acting worth attends ;
Whilst mere professions are by doubts encumber'd.

Essex. My deeds have oft declar'd, in danger's front,
How far my duty and my valour lead me.
Allegiance still my thirst of glory fir'd,
And all my bravely gather'd, envy'd laurels,
Were purchas'd only to adorn my queen.

Queen. ' Yet fact o'er fallacy must still prevail,
' And eloquence to simple truth give way.'
Your guilty scorn of my intrusted power,
When with my mortal foes you tamely dally'd,
By hardy rebels brav'd, you poorly fought
A servile pause, and begg'd a shameful truce.
Should Essex thus, so meanly compromise,
And lose the harvest of a plenteous glory,
In idle treaties, and suspicious parly ?

Essex. Oh, deadly stroke ! My life's the destin'd mark.
The poison'd shaft has drunk my spirits deep.
Is't come to this ? Conspire with rebels ! Ha !
I've serv'd you, Madam, with the utmost peril,
And ever glory'd in th' illustrious danger ;

Where

Where famine fac'd me with her meagre mein,
 And pestilence and death brought up her train.
 I've fought your battles, in despite of nature,
 Where seasons sicken'd, and the clime was fate.
 My power to parly, or to fight, I had
 From you; the time and circumstance did call
 Aloud for mutual treaty and condition;
 For that I stand a guarded felon here.—A traitor,
 Hemm'd in by villains, and by slaves furrounded.

Queen. Shall added insolence, with crest audacious,
 Her front uplift against the face of power.
 Think not that injur'd majesty will bear
 Such arrogance uncheck'd, or unchastis'd.
 No public trust becomes the man, who treads,
 With scornful steps, in honour's sacred path,
 And stands at bold defiance with his duty.

Essex. Away with dignities and hated trust,
 With flattering honours, and deceitful power!
 Invert th' eternal rules of right and justice;
 Let villains thrive, and out-cast virtue perish;
 Let slaves be rais'd, and cowards have command.
 Take, take your gaudy trifles back, those baits
 Of vice, and virtue's bane.—'Tis clear, my queen,
 My royal mistress, casts me off; nay, joins
 With Cecil to destroy my life, and fame.

Queen. Presuming wretch! Audacious traitor!

Essex. Traitor!

Queen. Hence from my sight, ungrateful slave, and
 At distance to revere your queen. [learn

Essex. Yes; let
 Me fly beyond the limits of the world,
 And nature's verge, from proud oppression far,
 From malice, tyranny, from courts, from you.

Queen. Traitor! villain! [Strikes him.

Essex. Confusion! what, a blow!
 Restrain, good Heav'n! down, down, thou rebel passion,
 And, judgment, take the reins. Madam, 'tis well—
 Your foldier falls degraded.
 His glory's tarnish'd, and his fame undone.
 O, bounteous recompence from royal hands!
 But you, ye implements, beware, beware,
 What honour wrong'd, and honest wrath can act.

Queen.

Queen. What would th' imperious traitor do? My life
Beyond thy wretched purpose stands secure.
Go, learn at leisure what your deeds deserve,
And tremble at the vengeance you provoke.

[*Exeunt all but Essex and Southampton.*]

Essex. Disgrac'd and struck! Damnation! Death were
Revenge! Revenge! [glorious.

South. Alas, my friend! what would
Thy rage attempt? Consider well the great
Advantage now your rash, ungovern'd temper
Affords your foes. The queen, incens'd, will let
Their fury loose.—I dread the dire event.

Essex. Has honest pride no just resentment left?
Nor injur'd honour feeling? Not revenge!
High Heaven shall bear, and earth regret my wrongs.
Hot indignation burns within my soul.
I'll do some dreadful thing—I know not what;
Some deed as horrid as the shame I feel,
Shall startle nature, and alarm the world.
Then hence, like lightning, let me furious fly,
To hurl destruction at my foes on high;
Pull down oppression from its tyrant seat,
Redeem my glory, or embrace my fate.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Enter Queen and Nottingham.

QUEEN.

NOT taken yet!

Not. No, Madam; for the earl
Of Essex, leagu'd with desperate friends, made strong
And obstinate resistance; till, at length,
O'erpower'd by numbers, and increasing force,
He fled for shelter to a small retreat,
A summer-house upon the Thames; resolv'd
To perish, rather than submit to power.

Queen. 'O, wretch detested! O, unheard-of treason!
'Conspire against my life, within my view!
'My reach! so near my very palace gates!

Perfidious

34 THE EARL OF ESSEX.

' Perfidious monster!—What can prudence do,
 ' Or human wisdom, more than judge from outside,
 ' And flattering likeness? Kings can see no farther.
 ' High Heav'n, alone, can read the heart, in all
 ' Its utmost frauds, and mystic characters.'
 Oh, where shall majesty bestow its favours,
 Since Essex has a traitor prov'd to me,
 Whose arm hath rais'd him up to power and greatness;
 Whose heart hath shar'd in all his splendid triumphs,
 And feels, ev'n now, his trait'rous deeds with pity?
 But hence with pity, and the woman's pangs;
 Resentment governs, and the queen shall punish.

Enter Burleigh.

Bur. Illustrious queen, the traitors all are seiz'd.
 Th' intelligence was true. Their black debates
 Were held at Drury-house. The dire result
 Was this: that Essex should alarm the citizens
 To open mutiny, and bold rebellion.

' On this pernicious errand went the earl,
 ' Join'd by his desp'rate and seditious friends.'
 Their purpose was to seize your royal palace,
 And sacred person; but your faithful people,
 As by one mind inform'd, one zeal inspir'd,
 Rose up at once, and with their virtue quell'd them.

Queen. Thanks to their honest, to their loyal hearts.
 But say, were any persons else concern'd,
 Of high distinction, or of noted rank?

Bur. Yes, Madam, many more, seduc'd of late,
 'Mong whom the bold Southampton foremost stands,
 ' Precipitate and rash; whose pow'r tho' great,
 ' Lags far behind his will to do you hurt.'
 They're now our pris'ners, and are safe secur'd;
 But Essex, with Southampton, and the rest
 Of greater note, I would not dare dispose of
 Without your royal mandate; and they now
 Attend without, to know your final pleasure.

Queen. Is this the just return of all my care;
 My anxious toilsome days, and watchful nights?
 Have I sent forth a wish, that went not freighted
 With all my people's good? Or, have I life,
 Or length of days desir'd, but for their sake?
 The public good is all my private care.

' Have

' Have I not ever thought the meanest subject,
 ' Oppress'd by power, was, in his just complaint,
 ' Above a king? What British bosom has
 ' By foreign tyranny been griev'd, whose wrongs
 ' I have not felt as mine, as mine redress'd?
 ' Or have I, justly, made a single man
 ' My foe?' Then could I think this grateful isle
 Contain'd one traitor's heart? But, least of all,
 That Essex' breast should lodge it? Call the monster,
 And let me meet this rebel, face to face.
 Do you withdraw, and wait within our call.

[Exit Burleigh, &c.]

Enter Essex.

You see we dare abide your dang'rous presence,
 Tho' treason sits within your heart enthron'd,
 And on that brow rebellion lours, where once
 Such boasted loyalty was said to flourish.
 How low the traitor can degrade the soldier!
 Guilt glares in conscious dye upon thy cheek,
 And inward horror trembles in thine eye.
 How mean is fraud! How base ingratitude!

Essex. Forbear reproach, thou injur'd majesty,
 Nor wound, with piercing looks, a heart already
 With anguish torn, and bleeding with remorse.
 Your awful looks, alone, are arm'd with death,
 And justice gives them terror.

Queen. Hapless man!

What cause could prompt, what fiend could urge thee on
 To this detested deed? Could I from thee
 Expect to meet this base return? from thee,
 To whom I ought to fly, with all the confidence
 That giving bounty ever could inspire,
 Or seeming gratitude and worth could promise?

Essex. Alas! I own my crimes, and feel my treasons;
 They press me down beneath the reach of pity.
 Despair alone can shield me from myself.
 Oh, let the little space I live be curs'd
 With countless woes; let death, unpitied, come;
 ' My name be mention'd with the utmost scorn,'
 If all my life can feel, or fame can suffer,
 Can serve to mitigate my queen's displeasure,

Queen. My pride forbids me to approach thee more;

My

My pity, rather, would relieve thy sorrow.
 ' I see conviction, and severe remorse,
 ' Within thy mind at work. But much I fear,
 ' That death alone can calm the raging conflict.'
 The people's clamours, and my special safety,
 Call loud for justice, and demand your life.
 But if forgiveness from an injur'd queen
 Can make the few short hours you live more easy,
 I give it freely from my pitying heart;
 And wish my willing power could grant thee more.

Essex. Oh, sounds angelic! goodness undeserv'd!
 My swelling heart can keep no bounds, my soul
 Flows o'er.—And will my gracious queen forgive me?
 Oh, let me prostrate thus before you fall,
 My better angel, and my guardian genius!
 Permit me, royal mistress, to announce
 My faithful sentiments, my soul's true dictates;
 Vouchsafe your Essex but this one request,
 This only boon, he'll thank you with his last,
 His dying breath, and bless you in his passage.

Queen. Rise, my lord.
 If aught you have to offer can allay
 Your woes, and reconcile you to your fate,
 Proceed;—and I with patient ear will listen.

Essex. My real errors, and my seeming crimes
 Would weary mercy, and make goodness poor:
 And yet the source of all my greatest faults
 Was loyalty misled, and duty in extreme.
 So jealous was my sanguine heart, so warm
 Affection's zeal, I could not bear the least
 Suspicion of my duty to my queen.
 This drove me from my high command in Ireland;
 This, too, impell'd me to that rude behaviour
 Which justly urg'd the shameful blow I felt;
 And this (O, fatal rashness!) made me think
 My queen had given her Essex up, a victim
 To statesmen's schemes, and wicked policy.
 Stung by that piercing thought, my madness flew
 Beyond all bounds, and now, alas! has brought me
 To this most shameful fall; and, what's still worse,
 My own reproaches, and my queen's displeasure.

Queen.

Queen. Unhappy man ! My yielding soul is touch'd,
And pity pleads thy cause within my breast.

Essex. Say but, my gracious sovereign, ere I go
For ever from your presence, that you think me
Guiltless of all attempts against your throne,
And sacred life. Your faithful Essex ne'er
Could harbour in his breast so foul a thought.
Believe it not, my queen. By Heav'n, I swear,
When in my highest pitch of glory rais'd,
The splendid noon of fortune's brightest sun-shine,
Not ages of renown could yield me half
The joy, nor make my life so greatly blest,
As saving yours, tho' for a single hour.

Queen. My lord, I think you honest. Nay, I own,
Whatever coldness I put on, was meant
To save you from the malice of your foes.
I judg'd your crimes, what you yourself pronounc'd 'em,
The rash effect of an intemp'rate zeal.

Essex. Was ever wretch like Essex thus undone
By goodness in excess, and lavish'd grace !
Oh, I could tear my erring heart, with these
Revenging hands !—What blessings have I lost !
What clemency abus'd !—Now could I wish
For lengthen'd life,—indeed for endless years.
A whole eternity's too short, to shew
My pious sorrows, and atone my folly.

Queen. ' Too well the passage to my heart he finds ;
' And pity's hand lets in the dangerous guest.
' How weak is reason, when oppos'd to nature ! [*Aside.*]
My lord, I would convince you that I still
Regard your life, and labour to preserve it ;
But cannot screen you from a public trial.
With prudence make your best defence : but should
Severity her iron jurisdiction
Extend too far, and give thee up condemn'd
To angry laws, thy queen will not forget thee.
Yet, lest you then shou'd want a faithful friend,
(For friends will fly you in the time of need)
Here, from my finger, take this ring, a pledge
Of mercy ; having this, you ne'er shall need
An advocate with me ; for whensoever
You give, or send it back, by Heav'n, I swear,

38 THE EARL OF ESSEX.

As I do hope for mercy on my soul,
That I will grant whatever boon you ask.

Essex. Oh, grace surprizing! most amazing goodness!
Words cannot paint the transports of my soul.
Let me receive it on my grateful knees,
At once to thank and bless the hand that gives it.

Queen. Depend, my lord, on this; 'twixt you and me
This ring shall be a private mark of faith [*Gives the ring.*
Inviolable. Be confident, cheer up,
Dispel each melancholy fear, and trust
Your sovereign's promise; she will ne'er forsake you.

Essex. Let Providence dispose my lot as 'twill,
May watchful angels ever guard my queen;
May healing wisdom in her counsels reign,
And firm fidelity surround her throne;
May victory her dreaded banners bear,
And joyful conquests crown her soldier's brow;
Let every bliss be mingled in her cup,
And Heaven at last become her great reward. [*Exit.*

Queen. 'Tis done;
And yet foreboding tremors shake my heart.
Something sits heavy here, and presses down
My spirits with its weight. What can it mean?
Suppose he is condemn'd; my royal word
Is plighted for his life; his enemies,
No doubt, will censure much.—No matter; let 'em.
I know him honest, and despise their malice.
' Unhappy state, where mercy and compassion
' Too often meet with clamour and reproach!
' But princes must endure, for public good,
' The narrow censures of misguiding crowds.'

Enter Countess of Rutland.

Rut. Where is the queen? I'll fall before her feet
Prostrate, implore, besiege her royal heart,
And force her to forgive.

Queen. What means this frenzy?

Rut. Oh, gracious queen, if ever pity touch'd
Your generous breast, let not the cruel axe
Destroy his precious life; preserve my Essex,
' Preserve, from shameful death, the noble, loyal,
' Oh, save the brave, the best of subjects.—Save'
My life, my hope, my joy, 'my all,' my husband.

Queen.

Q. Husband ! What sudden deadly blow is this !
Hold up, my soul, nor sink beneath this wound.
You beg a traitor's life !

Rut. Oh, gracious queen !
He ever lov'd---was ever faithful, brave---
If nature dwells about your heart, Oh, spurn
Me not ! My lord ! my love ! my husband bleeds !

Q. Take her away.

Rut. ' I cannot let you go.
' Hold off your hands'---Here on this spot I'll fix,
Here lose all sense. Still let me stretch these arms,
Inexorable queen, he yet may live.
Oh, give him to my poor afflicted heart !
One pitying look, to save me from distraction.

Q. I'll hear no more. I'm tortur'd---take her hence.

Rut. Nay, force me not away.—Inhuman wretches !
Oh, mercy, mercy ! Then to thee, good Heav'n,
(My queen, my cruel queen, denies to hear me)
To thee I call, to thee for mercy bend.
Melt down her bosom's frozen sense to feel
Some portion of my deadly grief, my fell
Distraction. Turn, Oh, turn, and see a wife,
A tortur'd wife——

Q. Why am I not obey'd ?

Rut. Nay, do not thus
Abandon me to fell despair. Just Heaven,
That sees my sorrows, will avenge the wrong,
This cruel wrong, this barbarous tyranny. [*Forced off.*]

Q. Wedded to Rutland ! Most unhappy pair !
And, Oh, ill fated queen ! Never till now
Did sorrow settle in my heart its throne.
Now black despair its cloudy curtain draws
Around thy setting peace, where joy, alas !
No more shall dawn, nor smiling hope return.
Recall my pledge of safety from his hands,
And give him up to death !—But life or death
To me is equal now. ' Distraction dwells
' Within my tortur'd soul, and furies rend it.'
Unhappy state, where peace shall never come !
One fatal moment has confirm'd my doom,
' Turn'd all my comfort to intestine strife,
And fill'd with mortal pangs, my future life.

[*Exit.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

Enter Raleigh, and Lieutenant of the Tower.

RALEIGH.

THEIR peers, with much indulgence, heard their
plea,

And gave them ample scope for their defence ;
But nought avail'd, their crimes were too notorious.
They bore their sentence with becoming spirit ;
And here's the royal mandate for their deaths. —
The lady Nottingham !—What brings her hither ?

Enter Lady Nottingham.

Not. Lieutenant, lead me to the earl of Essex,
I bring a message to him from the queen.

Lieu. He's with his friend, the brave Southampton,
Madam,
Preparing now for his expected fate.

But I'll acquaint his lordship with your pleasure. [*Exit.*

Ral. What means this message ? Does the queen re-
lent ?

Not. I fear she does : ‘ for such a war of passions,
‘ Such varying tumults never strove within
‘ Her breast till now. Sometimes she rails at Essex,
‘ And calls him villain, traitor, dooms him dead ;
‘ Yet, in a moment, turns again to pity.
‘ At length she sent me to th’ ungrateful earl,
‘ To learn if he could offer aught that might
‘ Induce her royal mercy to forgiveness.’

Go you to court, for Cecil there expects you.
I’ve promis’d to acquaint him with what passes
’Twixt me and Essex e’re I see the queen.

Ral. Madam, I go.

[*Exit.*

Not. Now, vengeance, steel my heart !
Offended woman, whilst her pride remains,
To malice only and revenge will bow ;
And every virtue at that altar sacrifice.
But see, he comes, with manly sorrow clad.
There was a time, that presence cou’d subdue
My pride, and melt my heart to gentle pity.
I then could find no joy but in his smiles ;

And

And thought him lovely as the summer's bloom :
But all his beauties are now hateful grown.

Enter Essex.

Essex. Whether you bring me death or life I know not.
But, if strict friendship and remembrance past
May aught presage to my afflicted heart,
Sure mercy only from those lips should flow,
And grace be utter'd from that friendly tongue.

Not. My lord, I'm glad you think me still your friend.
I come not to upbraid but serve you now ;
And pleas'd I am to be the messenger
Of such glad tidings, in the day of trouble,
As now I bring you. When the queen had heard
That by the lords you were condemn'd to die,
She sent me, in her mercy, here to know
If you had aught to offer that might move
Her royal clemency to spare your life.

Essex. Could any circumstance new lustre add
To my dread sovereign's goodness, 'tis the making
The kind, the generous Nottingham its messenger.
Oh, Madam ! cou'd my glowing heart express
It's grateful sentiments, 'twou'd speak such language
As angels utter, when they praise their Maker.

Not. 'Tis well, my lord ; but there's no time to spare,
The queen impatient waits for my return.

Essex. My heart was wishing for some faithful friend,
And bounteous Heav'n hath sent thee to my hopes.
Know then, kind Nottingham, for now I'll trust
Thee with the dearest secret of my life,
'Tis not long since the queen (who well foresaw
To what the malice of my foes wou'd drive me)
Gave me this ring, this sacred pledge of mercy ;
And with it, made a solemn vow to Heav'n,
That, whensoever I should give or send
It back again, she'd freely grant whate'er
Request I then shou'd make.

Not. Give, give it me,
My lord, and let me fly on friendship's wings,
To bear it to the queen, and to it add
My prayers and influence to preserve thy life.

Essex. Oh, take it then—it is the pledge of life,
The precious spring that drives my vital stream

Around, and keeps my heart still warm: 'it is
 ' The door of breath, the hope of joy, the shield
 ' Of friendship'—Oh, it is my dear Southampton's
 Last, last remaining stay, his thread of being,
 Which more than words I prize.—O, take it then,
 Take it, thou guardian angel of my life,
 And offer up the incense of my pray'r!
 Oh, beg, intreat, implore her majesty,
 From public shame, and ignominious death,
 And from th' obdurate axe, to save my friend.

Not. My lord, with all the powers that nature gave,
 And friendship can inspire, I'll urge the queen
 To grant you your request.

Essex. Kind Nottingham,
 Your pious offices shall ever be
 My fervent theme; and if my doubtful span
 Relenting Heav'n should stretch to years remote,
 Each passing hour shall still remind my thoughts,
 And tell me that I owe my all to thee.
 My friend shall thank you too for lengthen'd life.
 And now I fly with comfort to his arms,
 To let him know the mercy that you bring. [Exit.

' *Not.* Yes, you shall feel my friendship's weight fall
 heavy
 ' Upon your guilty soul, ungrateful man!
 ' Your false, disdainful heart shall pay the fine
 ' Of love neglected, and of beauty scorn'd.' [Exit.

SCENE, the Court.

Enter Queen and Burleigh.

Q. Ha! is not Nottingham return'd?

Bur. No, Madam.

Q. Dispatch a speedy messenger to haste her.
 My agitated heart can find no rest.
 So near the brink of fate—unhappy man!

Enter Nottingham.

How now, my Nottingham, what news from Essex?
 What says the earl?

Not. I wish, with all my soul,
 Th' ungrateful task had been another's lot.
 I dread to tell it—Lost, ill-fated man!

Q. What

2. What means this mystery, this strange behaviour?
Pronounce—declare at once; what said the earl?

Not. Alas, my queen, I fear to say; his mind
Is in the strangest mood, that ever pride
On blackest thoughts begot. He scarce would speak;
And when he did, it was with fullness,
With hasty tone, and down-cast look.

2. Amazing!
Not feel the terrors of approaching death!
Nor yet the joyful dawn of promis'd life!

Not. He rather seem'd insensible to both,
And with a cold indifference heard your offer;
Till warming up, by slow degrees, resentment
Began to swell his restless, haughty mind,
And proud disdain provok'd him to exclaim
Aloud, against the partial power of fortune,
And faction's rage. I begg'd him to consider
His sad condition, nor repulse with scorn
The only hand that could preserve him.

2. Ha!
What! Said he nothing of a private import?
No circumstance—no pledge—no ring?

Not. None, Madam,
But with contemptuous front disclaim'd at once
Your proffer'd grace; and scorn'd, he said, a life
Upon such terms bestow'd.

2. Impossible!
Could Essex treat me thus? You basely wrong him,
And wrest his meaning from the purpos'd point.
Recall betimes the horrid words you've utter'd;
Confess, and own the whole you've said was false.

Not. Madam, by truth, and duty both compell'd,
Against the pleadings of my pitying soul,
I must declare (Heav'n knows with what reluctance)
That never pride insulted mercy more.
He ran o'er all the dangers he had past;
His mighty deeds; his service to the state;
Accus'd your majesty of partial leaning
To favourite lords, to whom he falls a sacrifice;
Appeals to justice, and to future times,
How much he feels from proud oppression's arm:

Nay, something too he darkly hinted at,
Of jealous disappointment, and revenge.

2. Eternal silence seal thy venom'd lips !
What hast thou utter'd, wretch, to rouse at once
A whirlwind in my soul, which roots up pity,
And destroys my peace ?
' Ha ! he defies me then ! Audacious traitor !'
Let him this instant to the block be led. [Exit. Not.
Upbraid me with my fatal fondness for him !
Ungrateful, barbarous ruffian ! Oh, Elizabeth !
Remember now thy long establish'd fame,
Thy envy'd glory, and thy father's spirit.
Accuse me of injustice too, and cruelty !
Yes, I'll this instant to the Tower, forget
My regal state, and to his face confront him :
Confound th' audacious villain with my presence,
And add new terrors to th' uplifted axe. [Exit.

SCENE, *the Tower.*

Essex and Southampton discovered.

Essex. Oh, name it not ! my friend shall live, he shall ;
I know her royal mercy, and her goodness,
Will give you back to life, to length of days,
And me to honour, loyalty, and truth.
Death is still distant far.

South. In life's first spring
Our green affections grew apace and prosper'd ;
The genial summer swell'd our joyful hearts,
To meet and mix each growing fruitful wish.
We're now embark'd upon that stormy flood
Where all the wise and brave are gone before us,
Ere since the birth of time, to meet eternity.
And what is death, did we consider right ?
Shall we, who fought him in the paths of terror,
And fac'd him in the dreadful walks of war,
Shall we astonish'd shrink, like frightened infants,
And start at scaffolds, and their gloomy trappings ?

Essex. Yet, still I trust long years remain of friendship.
Let smiling hope drive doubt and fear away,
And death be banish'd far ; where creeping age,
Disease and care, invite him to their dwelling.

I feel

I feel assurance rise within my breast,
That all will yet be well.

South. Count not on hope—

We never can take leave, my friend, of life,
On nobler terms. Life! what is life? A shadow!
Its date is but th' immediate breath we draw;
Nor have we surety for a second gale;
Ten thousand accidents in ambush lie
For the embody'd dream.

A frail and fickle tenement it is,
Which, like the brittle glass that measures time,
Is often broke, ere half its sands are run.

Essex. Such cold philosophy the heart disdains,
And friendship shudders at the moral tale.
My friend, the fearful precipice is past,
And danger dare not meet us more. Fly swift,
Ye better angels, waft the welcome tidings
Of pardon to my friend; of life and joy.

Enter Lieutenant.

Lieu. I grieve to be the messenger of woe,
But must, my lords, intreat you to prepare
For instant death. Here is the royal mandate
That orders your immediate execution.

Essex. Immediate execution!—What, so sudden!
No message from the queen, or Nottingham?

Lieu. None, Sir.

Essex. Deluded hopes! Oh, worse than death!
Pefidious queen, to make a mock of life!
My friend, my friend destroy'd! Oh, piercing thought!
Oh, dismal chance—In my destruction ruin'd!
In my sad fall undone! Why could not mine,
My life atone for both; my blood appease?
Can you, my friend, forgive me?

South. Yes, O yes,
My bosom's better half, I can. With thee
I'll gladly seek the coast unknown, and leave
The lessening mark of irksome life behind.
With thee, my friend, 'tis joy to die! 'tis glory;
For who would wait the tardy stroke of time,
Or cling, like reptiles, to the verge of being,
When we can bravely leap from life at once,
And spring triumphant in a friend's embrace?

Enter

Enter Raleigh.

Ral. To you, my lord Southampton, from the queen
A pardon comes: your life her mercy spares.

Essex. For ever blest be that indulgent power
Which saves my friend. This weight ta'en off, my soul
Shall upward spring, and mingle with the blest.

South. All-ruling heavens, can this, can this be just?
Support me; hold, ye straining heart-strings, hold,
And keep my sinking frame from dissolution.
Oh, 'tis too much for mortal strength to bear,
Or thought to suffer! No, I'll die with thee.
They shall not part us, Essex.

Essex. Live, Oh, live,
Thou noblest, bravest, best of men and friends,
Whilst life is worth thy wish, till time and thou
Agree to part, and nature send thee to me;
Thou gen'rous soul, farewell;—live and be happy;
And, Oh! may life make largely up to thee
Whatever blessing fate has thus cut off
From thy departing friend.

Lieu. My lord, my warrant
Strictly forbids to grant a moment's time.

South. Oh, must we part for ever?—Cruel fortune!
Wilt thou then tear him hence?—'Severe divorce!
Let me cling round thy sacred person still,
Still clasp thee to my bosom close, and keep
Stern fate at distance.

Essex. Oh, my friend, we'll meet
Again where virtue finds a just reward,
Where factious malice never more can reach us.
Recall thy reason, be thyself once more.—
I fear it not.—This hideous monster, death,
When seen at distance, shocks weak nature's eye;
But reason, as it draws more near, defies it.—
I thank thy sorrows, but cou'd spare 'em now.
I need not bid thee guard my fame from wrongs:
And, Oh! a dearer treasure to thy care
I trust, than either life or fame—my wife.
Her bitter sorrows, pierce my soul; for her
My heart drops blood!--Oh, she will want a friend.
Then take her to thy care; do thou pour balm
On her deep-wounded spirit, and let her find

My

My tender helps in thee.---I must be gone,
 My ever faithful, and my gallant friend.---
 I pr'ythee leave this woman's work.—Farewel—
 Take this last, dear embrace.---Farewel for ever!

South. My bursting breast!--I fain would speak, but
 Are poor——Farewel!—— [words

But we shall meet again, embrace in one
 Eternal band, which never shall be loos'd. [Exit.

Essex. To death's concluding stroke, lead on, lieutenant.
 My wife!--Now reason, fortitude, support me;
 For now, indeed, comes on my forest trial.

Essex Enter Countess of Rutland.

Rut. Oh, thou last, dear reserve of fortune's malice!
 For fate can add no more---Oh, com'st thou then
 In this dread hour, when all my straining thoughts
 Are struggling in the tenderest ties of nature!
 Oh, com'st thou now t'arrest my parting soul,
 And force it back to life!

Rut. Thou sole delight,
 Thou only joy which life cou'd ever give,
 Or death deprive me of; my wedded lord;
 I come, with thee determin'd to endure
 The utmost rigour of our angry stars;
 To join thee, fearless, in the grasp of death,
 And seek some dwelling in a world beyond it.

Essex. Too much, thou partner of this dismal hour,
 Thy generous soul would prompt thee to endure;
 Nor can thy tender, trembling heart sustain it.
 Long years of bliss remain in store for thee;
 And smiling Time his treasures shall unfold
 To bribe thy stay.

Rut. Thou cruel comforter!
 Alas! what's life, what's hated life to me?
 'Can aught beneath this starry hemisphere,
 'Which earth's extent, and nature's wealth can yield,
 'Which proud ambition stretches to enjoy,
 'Or passion pants for, recompense thy loss?'
 Alas! this universe, this goodly frame,
 Shall all as one continued curse appear,
 And every object blast, when thou art gone.

Essex. Oh, strain not thus the little strength I've left,
 The weak support that holds up life, to bear

A few

A few short moments more, its weight of woe,
 Its loss of thee. Oh, turn away those eyes,
 Nor with that look melt down my fix'd resolve;
 And yet a little longer let me gaze
 On that lov'd form. Alas! I feel my sight
 Grows dim, and reason from her throne retires;
 For pity's sake, let go my breaking heart,
 And leave me to my fate.

Rut. Why wilt thou still
 Of parting talk, since life its thousand gates
 Unbars to let us through together? 'Death
 'Is but a step that reaches to eternity.'
 Oh, that the friendly hand of Heav'n wou'd snatch
 Us both at once, above the distant stars,
 Where fortune's venom'd shafts can never pierce,
 Nor cruel queens destroy!—'Nay, look not so.'

Essex. The awful searcher, whose impartial eye
 Explores the secrets of each human heart,
 And every thought surveys, can witness for me,
 How close thy image clings around my soul:
 Retards each rising wish, and draws me back
 To life, entangled by that lov'd idea.
 When fell necessity those ties shall break,
 For quickly break they must——when I from earth
 On faith's white angel wings to heaven shall soar,
 Thy lasting form shall still my mind possess,
 Where bliss supreme each faculty o'erwhelms,
 And raptur'd angels glow.

Lieut. My lord, 'the time
 'Too far is stretch'd;' it now grows late.

Essex. Lead on.

Rut. Stay, stay, my love! my dearest, dying lord!
 Ah, whither wouldst thou go? Ah, do not leave me!
 Alas! I'll hasten to attend your flight;
 And nature gives consent we should not part.
 I feel each faculty for fate prepare,
 And my quick soul wou'd fain set out before you.
 'Oh, precious pangs!—Oh, dear distress!—still closer
 'To thy quick throbbing heart let mine complain,
 'And on thy labouring bosom breathe my last.' [*Faints.*

Essex. Thou sinking excellence! thou matchless wo-
 Shall fortune rob me of thy dear embrace, [man!
 Or

Or earth's whole power, or death divide us now !
Stay, stay, thou spotless, injur'd faint, and take——

Lieut. My lord, already you have been indulg'd
Beyond what I can warrant by my orders.

Essex. Oh, let me on her dying bosom fall,
Embrace her spotless form.—One moment more
Afford me to my sorrows.—Oh, look there !
Cou'd bitter anguish pierce your heart, like mine,
You'd pity now the mortal pangs I feel,
The throbs that tear my vital strings away,
And rend my agonizing soul.——

Lieut. My lord——

Essex. But one short moment, and I will attend.
Ye sacred ministers that virtue guard,
And shield the righteous in the paths of peril,
Restore her back to life, and lengthen'd years
Of joy ; dry up her bleeding sorrows all :
Oh, cancel from her thoughts this dismal hour,
And blot my image from her sad remembrance.
'Tis done.——

And now, ye trembling cords of life, give way :
Nature and time, let go your hold ; eternity
Demands me.

[*Exeunt Essex and Lieutenant.*]

'*Woman.* She returns to life, see ! help !'

Rut. Where has my lost, benighted soul been wand'ring ?
What means this mist that hangs about my mind ?
Through which reflection's painful eye discerns
Imperfect forms, and horrid shapes of woe.
The cloud dispels, the shades withdraw, and all
My dreadful fate appears.—Oh, where's my lord,
My life ! my Essex ! Oh, whither have they ta'en him ?

Enter Queen and Attendants.

Q. To execution ! Fly with lightning's wing,
And save him. ' Hah ! by whose command was this ?
' Stop, stop the fatal blow.—My fears were true.'

[*Exit one of the attendants.*]

Rut. Thou saving angel, sent from Heav'n ! my queen,
My gracious queen, ' be quick !—the bloody Burleigh !
' A moment may destroy him. Stretch thy arm,
' Defend, defend,' O, snatch him from the blow !
Preserve my husband ! ' O, Elizabeth,

E

' Look

‘ Look down upon me. Angels move her heart
 ‘ To pity ; save him, save him, gracious queen.’

Q. Be calm, he shall not die. Rise up. I came
 To save his life.

Rut. ’Tis mercy’s voice that speaks.
 My Essex shall again be mine. My queen,
 My bounteous, gracious queen, has said the word.
 May troops of angels guard thy sacred life,
 And, in thy latest moments, waft thy soul
 To meet that mercy, in the realms of joy,
 Which now thy royal goodness grants to me.

Enter Burleigh.

Bur. Madam, your orders came, alas ! too late.
 Ere they arriv’d the axe had fallen on Essex.

Rut. Ha ! dead ! What hell is this that opens round me ?
 What fiend art thou that draws the horrid scene ?
 Ah, Burleigh ! bloody murd’rer, where’s my husband !
 ‘ Oh, where’s my lord, my Essex ?’
 Destruction seize and madness rend my brain.
 See, see, they bend him to the fatal block ;
 Now, now the horrid axe is lifted high,
 It falls, it falls ; he bleeds, he bleeds ; he dies !

Q. Alas, her sorrows pierce my suffering heart.

Rut. Eternal discord, tear the social world.
 ‘ And nature’s laws dissolve ! expunge, erase
 ‘ The hated marks of time’s engraving hand,
 ‘ And every trace destroy !’ Arise, despair,
 ‘ Assert thy rightful claim,’ possess me all !
 Bear, bear me to my murder’d lord, to clasp
 His bleeding body in my dying arms,
 And in the tomb embrace his dear remains,
 And mingle with his dust for ever.

[*Exit.*

Q. Hapless woman !
 She shall henceforth be partner of my sorrows ;
 And we’ll contend who most shall weep for Essex.
 Oh, quick to kill, and ready to destroy, [*To Burleigh.*
 Cou’d no pretext be found, no cause appear,
 To lengthen mercy out a moment more,
 And stretch the span of grace ? Oh, cruel Burleigh !
 This, this was thy dark work, unpitying man !

Bur. My gracious mistress, blame not thus my duty,
 My firm obedience to your high command.

The laws condemn'd him first to die; nor think
I stood between your mercy and his life.
It was the lady Nottingham, not I.
Herself confess'd it all, in wild despair,
That from your majesty to Essex sent,
With terms of proffer'd grace, she then receiv'd
From his own hand a fatal ring, a pledge
It seems of much importance, which the earl
With earnest suit, and warm entreaty, begg'd her,
As she would prize his life, to give your majesty.
In this she fail'd—In this she murder'd Essex!

2. Oh, barbarous woman!
Surrounded still by treachery and fraud!
'What bloody deed is this? Thou injur'd Essex!'
My fame is soil'd to all succeeding times:
But Heav'n alone can view my breaking heart;
Then let its will be done.

From hence, let proud, resisting mortals know
The arm parental, and th' indulgent blow.
To Heaven's corrective rod, submissive bend;
Adore its wisdom, on its power depend;
Whilst ruling justice guides eternal sway,
Let nature tremble, and let man obey.

END of the FIFTH ACT.

(52)
E P I L O G U E.

By an unknown hand.

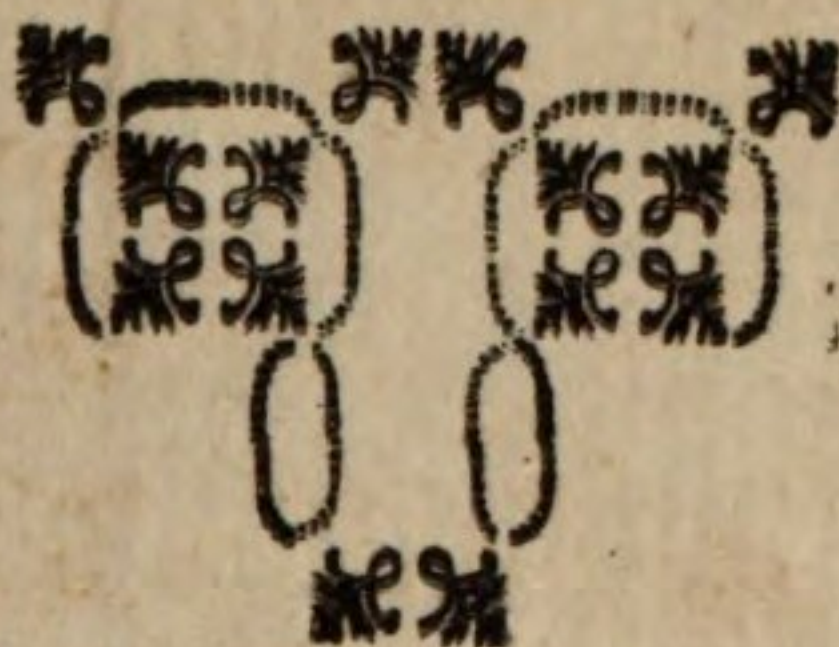
Spoken originally by Mrs. CIBBER.

NEWs! News! good folks, rare news, and you shall
I've got intelligence about our poet? [know it.—
Who do you think he is?—You'll never guess;
An Irish Bricklayer, neither more or less.
And now the secret's out, you cannot wonder,
That in commencing bard he made a blunder.
Has he not left the better for the worse,
In quitting solid brick for empty verse?
Can he believe th' example of Old Ben,
Who chang'd, like him, the trowel for the pen,
Will in his favour move your critic bowels?
You rather wish, most poet's pens were trowels.
One man is honest, sensible, and plain,
Nor has the poet made him pert, or vain:
No beau, no courtier, nor conceited youth;
But then so rude, he always speaks the truth;
I told him he must flatter, learn address,
And gain the heart of some rich patroness:
'Tis she, said I, your labours will reward,
If you but join the bricklay'r with the bard;
As thus——Should she be old and worse for wear,
You must new-case her, front her and repair;
If crack'd in fame, as scarce to bear a touch,
You cannot use your trowel then too much;
In short, whate'er her morals, age or station,
Plaster and white-wash in your dedication.
Thus I advis'd—but he detests the plan:
What can be done with such a simple man?
A poet's nothing worth and nought availing,
Unless he'll furnish where there is a failing.
Authors in these good times are made and us'd,
To grant these favours nature has refus'd.
If he won't fib, what bounty can he crave?
We pay for what we want, not what we have.—

Nay,

E P I L O G U E.

Nay, though of every blessing we have store,
 Our sex will always wish——a little more.——
 If he'll not bend his heart to this his duty,
 And sell, to who will buy, wit, honour, beauty;
 The bricklay'r still for him the proper trade is,
 Too rough to deal with gentlemen and ladies.——
 In short—they'll all avoid him, and neglect him,
 Unless that you, his patrons, will protect him.





Roberts del.

Thornthwaite Sculp.

M. and M^{rs} B.A.A.

2
BELL'S EDITION.

TAMERLANE;

A TRAGEDY, by N. ROWE, Esq.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,
By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,
By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

————— *Magnus ad altum*
Fulminat Euphraten bello, victorque volentes
Per populos dat jura, viamque affectat Olympo.

VIRG. GEORG.

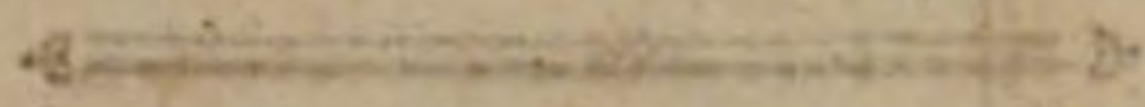


LONDON:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCLXXVI.

REPRINTED



TAMERLANE

A TRAGEDY

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-FRANCAISE

By the French Comedians

IN THE YEAR 1793

By M. M. M. M. M.

Translated from the French

By M. M. M.



LONDON

Printed by J. Johnson, in the Strand, near St. Dunstons Church, at the Sign of the Sun

MDCCXCIII

To the Right Honourable

W I L L I A M,

L O R D M A R Q U I S of

H A R T I N G T O N.

(Afterwards Duke of Devonshire.)

MY LORD,

EVERY body is now so full of business, that things of this kind, which are generally taken for the entertainment of leisure hours only, look like impertinence and interruption. I am sure it is a reason why I ought to beg your Lordship's pardon, for troubling you with this tragedy; not but that poetry has always been, and will still be, the entertainment of all wise men, that have any delicacy in their knowledge; yet at so critical a juncture as this is, I must confess, I think your Lordship ought to give entirely into those public affairs, which, at this time, seem to demand you. It is that happy turn which your Lordship has to business; that right understanding of your country's interest, and that constant zeal to pursue it; that just thinking; that strong and persuasive elocution; that firm and generous resolution, which, upon all occasions, you have shewn in parliament; and, to add that which is the crowning good quality, your Lordship's continual adherence, and unshaken loyalty, to his present Majesty, which make you at this time so necessary to the public.

public. I must confess (tho' there is no part in your Lordship's character, but what the world should be fond of) I cannot help distinguishing the last instance very particularly. It is doing, methinks, such a justice to goodness, to greatness, and to right reason, that posterity will believe there could be no man of good sense, but what must have agreed with your Lordship in it. When the next age shall read the history of this, what excuse can they make for those who did not admire a prince, whose life has been a series of good offices done to mankind? When they shall reckon up his labours, from the battle of Seneff, to some glorious action, which shall be his last, (and which I therefore hope is very far remov'd from the present time) will they ever believe that he could have been too well loved, or too faithfully served and defended? The great things which he did before we had that immediate interest in him which we now happily have, is a noble and just subject for panegyric; but as benefits done to others can never touch us so sensibly as those we receive ourselves, tho' the actions may be equally great; so, methinks, I can hardly have patience to run back to his having saved his own country, when I consider he has since done the same for us; let that be sufficient to us, for all we can say of him, or do for him. What dangers and difficulties has he not struggled through, for the honour and safety of these kingdoms? 'Tis a common praise, and what every one speaks, to say, he has continually exposed his life for his people. But there are some things more particular in his character, some things rarely found amongst the policies of princes; a zeal for religion, moderated by reason, without the rage and fire of persecution; a charitable compassion for those who cannot be convinced; and an unalterable perseverance in those principles, of whose truth he is satisfied; a desire of war, for the sake of peace, and of peace, for the good and honour of his subjects, equally with his own; a pious care for composing factions, tho' to foment them might make him arbitrary; and a generous ambition, that only aims at power, to enable him to do good to all the rest of the world. I might add here, that inviolable and religious observance of his royal word, which the best part of the powers of Europe have so frequently,

and

and so happily for themselves, depended upon in the greatest emergencies; but as this virtue is generally reckoned as no more than that common honesty, which the meanest man would blush to be without; so it can hardly claim a place amongst the more particular excellencies of a great prince. It were to be wished, indeed, that the world were honest to such a degree, and that there were not that scandalous defect of common morality. Certainly, nothing can be more shocking to humanity, to the peace and order of the world, nothing can approach nearer to that savage state of nature, in which every man is to eat his fellow if he can master him, than an avowed liberty of breaking thro' all the most solemn engagements of public faith. 'Tis something that brands a man with an infamy which nothing can extenuate or wipe out; he may protest, and pretend to explain his meaning, but the world has generally too much indignation for the affront, to bear it at that easy rate. Ministers and secretaries of state may display their own parts in memorials, with as much pomp and flourish as they please; I fancy the common answer, upon such occasions, will always be, You have deceived us grossly, and we neither can nor will trust you any more. When this vice comes amongst men of the first rank, it is the more shocking, and I could wish there were none such, to whose charge it might be laid.

Some people (who do me a very great honour in it) have fancied, that in the person of Tamerlane, I have alluded to the greatest character of the present age. I don't know whether I ought not to apprehend a great deal of danger from avowing a design like that. It may be a task, indeed, worthy the greatest genius which this, or any other time, has produced; but therefore I ought not to stand the shock of a parallel, lest it should be seen, to my disadvantage, how far the hero has transcended the poet's thought. There are many features, 'tis true, in that great man's life, not unlike his Majesty; his courage, his piety, his moderation, his justice, and his fatherly love of his people; but above all, his hate of tyranny and oppression, and his zealous care for the common good of mankind, carry a large resemblance of him. Several incidents are alike in their stories; and there

wants nothing to his Majesty, but such a deciding victory, as that by which Tamerlane gave peace to the world. That is yet to come; but I hope we may reasonably expect it, from the unanimity of the present parliament, and so formidable a force as that unanimity will give life and vigour to.

If your Lordship can find any thing in this poem like a prince who is so justly the object of your Lordship's and indeed of the world's veneration, I persuade myself it will prevail with you to forgive every thing else that you find amiss. You will excuse the faults in writing, for the goodness of the intention. I hope, too, your Lordship will not be displeased, that I take this opportunity of renewing the honour which I formerly had to be known to your Lordship, and which gives me, at once, the pleasure of expressing those just and dutiful sentiments I have for his Majesty, and that strong inclination which I have always had, to be thought,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

humble servant,

N. ROWE.

P R O.

P R O L O G U E.

OF all the muse's various labours, none
 Have lasted longer, or have higher flown,
 Than those that tell the fame by ancient heroes won.
 With pleasure, Rome, and great Augustus, heard
 "Arms and the man" sung by the Mantuan bard.
 In spite of time, the sacred story lives,
 And Cæsar and his empire still survives.
 Like him (tho' much unequal to his flame)
 Our author makes a pious prince his theme:
 High with the foremost names, in arms he stood,
 Had fought and suffer'd for his country's good,
 Yet sought not fame, but peace, in fields of blood.
 Safe under him his happy people sate,
 And griev'd, at distance, for their neighbour's fate;
 Whilst with success a Turkish monarch crown'd,
 Like spreading flame, deform'd the nations round;
 With sword and fire he forc'd his impious way
 To lawless pow'r, and universal sway.
 Some abject states, for fear, the tyrant join,
 Others, for gold, their liberties resign,
 And venal princes sold their right divine:
 'Till Heav'n, the growing evil to redress,
 Sent Tamerlane to give the world a peace.
 The hero rous'd, asserts the glorious cause,
 And to the field the chearful soldier draws.
 Around, in crowds, his valiant leaders wait,
 Anxious for glory, and secure of fate;
 Well pleas'd, once more, to venture on his side,
 And prove that faith again, which had so oft been try'd.
 The peaceful fathers, who in senates meet,
 Approve an enterprize so just, so great;
 While with their prince's arms, their voice thus join'd,
 Gains half the praise of having sav'd mankind.

Ev'n in a circle, where, like this, the fair
 Were met, the bright assembly did declare,
 Their house, with one consent, were for the war;

Each

*Each urg'd her lover to unsheath his sword,
 And never spare a man who broke his word.
 Thus fir'd, the brave on to the danger press;
 Their arms were crown'd abroad with just success,
 And blest at home with beauty and with peace.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

	Drury-Lane.	Covent-Garden.
<i>Tamerlane,</i>	Mr. Palmer.	Mr. Sheridan.
<i>Bajazet,</i>	Mr. Smith.	Mr. Barry.
<i>Axalla,</i>	Mr. Brereton.	Mr. Clinch.
<i>Moneses,</i>	Mr. Reddish.	Mr. Wroughton.
<i>Stratocles,</i>	Mr. J. Aickin.	Mr. Fox.
<i>Prince of Tanais,</i>	Mr. Davies.	Mr. Booth.
<i>Omar,</i>	Mr. Hurst.	Mr. Fearon.
<i>Mirvan,</i>	Mr. Wright.	Mr. Davis.
<i>Zama,</i>	Mr. Norris.	Mr. Thompson.
<i>Halv,</i>	Mr. Whitefield.	Mr. Wewitzer.
<i>Dervise,</i>	Mr. Bransby.	Mr. L'Estrange.

W O M E N.

<i>Arpasia,</i>	Miss Younge.	Mrs. Barry.
<i>Selima,</i>	Mrs. Hopkins.	Mrs. Jackson.

Parthian and Tartarian soldiers.

Mutes belonging to Bajazet.

Other attendants.

SCENE, Tamerlane's camp, near Angoria in Galatia.

TAMER.

T A M E R L A N E.

A C T I.

SCENE *before Tamerlane's tent.**Enter the Prince of Tanais, Zama, and Mirvan.**Prince of TANAIIS.*

HAIL to the sun ! from whose returning light
 The chearful soldier's arms new lustre take,
 To deck the pomp of battle. Oh, my friends !
 Was ever such a glorious face of war ?
 See, from this height, how all Galatia's plains
 With nations numberless are cover'd o'er ;
 Who, like a deluge, hide the face of earth,
 And leave no object in the vast horizon,
 But glitt'ring arms and skies.

Zam. Our Asian world,
 From this important day expects a lord ;
 This day they hope an end of all their woes,
 Of tyranny, of bondage, and oppression,
 From our victorious emp'ror, Tamerlane.

Mir. Well has our holy Alha mark'd him out
 ' The scourge of lawless pride, and dire ambition,
 ' The great avenger of the groaning world.
 ' Well has he worn the sacred cause of justice
 ' Upon his prosp'rous sword. Approving Heav'n
 ' Still crown'd the righteous warrior with success ;
 ' As if it said, go forth, and be my champion,
 ' Thou, most like me of all my works below.

Pr. No lust of rule, the common vice of kings,
 ' No furious zeal, inspir'd by hot-brain'd priests,
 ' Ill hid beneath religion's specious name,
 ' E'er drew his temp'rate courage to the field :
 ' But to redress an injur'd people's wrongs,
 ' To save the weak one from the strong oppressor,
 ' Is all his end of war. And when he draws

• The

‘ The sword to punish, like relenting Heav’n,
 ‘ He seems unwilling to deface his kind.

‘ *Mir.* So rich his soul in ev’ry virtuous grace,
 ‘ That, had not nature made him great by birth,
 ‘ Yet all the brave had fought him for their friend.
 ‘ The Christian prince, Axalla, nicely bred
 ‘ In polish’d arts of European courts,
 ‘ For him forsakes his native Italy,
 ‘ And lives a happy exile in his service.

‘ *Pr.* Pleas’d with the gentle manners of that prince,
 ‘ Our mighty lord is lavish to his friendship;
 ‘ Tho’ Omar and the Tartar lords repine,
 ‘ And loudly tax their monarch as too partial.

‘ *Zam.* Ere the mid-hour of night, from tent to tent,
 ‘ Unweary’d, thro’ the num’rous host he past,
 ‘ Viewing with careful eyes each sev’ral quarter;
 ‘ Whilst from his looks, as from divinity,
 ‘ The soldiers took presage, and cry’d, Lead on,
 ‘ Great Alha, and our emperor, lead on,
 ‘ To victory, and everlasting fame.’

Mir. Hear you of Bajazet?

Pr. Late in the evening

A slave of near attendance on his person
 ‘ Scap’d to our camp. From him we learn’d, the tyrant,
 With rage redoubled, for the fight prepares;
 Some accidental passion fires his breast
 (Love, as ’tis thought, for a fair Grecian captive)
 And adds new horror to his native fury.

‘ For five returning suns, scarce was he seen
 ‘ By any the most favour’d of his court,
 ‘ But in lascivious ease, among his women,
 ‘ Liv’d from the war retir’d; or else alone,
 ‘ In sullen mood, sat meditating plagues
 ‘ And ruin to the world; ’till yester morn,
 ‘ Like fire that lab’ring upwards rends the earth,
 ‘ He burst with fury from his tent, commanding
 ‘ All should be ready for the fight this day.

‘ *Zam.* I know his temper well, since in his court,
 ‘ Companion of the brave Axalla’s embassy.
 ‘ I oft observ’d him proud, impatient
 ‘ Of aught superior, e’en of Heav’n that made him.
 ‘ Fond of false glory, of the savage pow’r

' Of ruling without reason, of confounding
 ' Just and unjust, by an unbounded will;
 ' By whom religion, honour, all the bands
 ' That ought to hold the jarring world in peace,
 ' Were held the tricks of state, snares of wise princes,
 ' To draw their easy neighbours to destruction.

' *Mir.* Thrice, by our law and prophet, has he sworn,
 ' By the world's Lord and Maker, lasting peace
 ' With our great master, and his royal friend
 ' The Grecian emperor; as oft, regardless
 ' Of plighted faith, with most unkingly baseness,
 ' Without a war proclaim'd or cause pretended,
 ' Has ta'en th' advantage of their absent arms,
 ' To waste with sword and fire their fruitful fields:
 ' Like some accursed fiend, who, 'scap'd from hell,
 ' Poisons the balmy air thro' which he flies,
 ' He blasts the bearded corn, and loaded branches,
 ' The lab'ring hind's best hopes, and marks his way with

Pr. But see his fate! The mighty Tamerlane [ruin.
 Comes, like the proxy of inquiring Heav'n,
 To judge, and to redress. [Flourish of trumpets.

Enter Tamerlane, guards, and other attendants.

Tam. Yet, yet a little, and destructive slaughter
 Shall rage around, and mar this beauteous prospect.
 Pass but an hour, which stands betwixt the lives
 Of thousands and eternity, what change
 Shall hasty death make in yon glitt'ring plain?
 Oh, thou fell monster, war! that in a moment
 Lay'st waste the noblest part of the creation,
 The boast and master-piece of the great Maker,
 That wears in vain th' impression of his image,
 Unprivileg'd from thee.

Health to our friends, and to our arms success,

[To the Prince, Zama, and Mirvan.

Such as the cause for which we fight deserves:

Pr. Nor can we ask beyond what Heav'n bestows,
 Preventing still our wishes. See, great Sir,
 The universal joy your soldiers wear,
 Omen of prosp'rous battle.

Impatient of the tedious night, in arms
 Watchful they stood, expecting op'ning day;
 And now are hardly by their leaders held

From

13 T A M E R L A N E

From darting on the foe. ‘ Like a hot courser,
 ‘ That bounding paws the mould’ring soil, disdain
 ‘ The rein that checks him, eager for the race.’

Tam. Yes, prince, I mean to give a loose to war.
 This morn Axalla, with my Parthian horse,
 Arrives to join me. He who, like a storm,
 Swept with his flying squadrons all the plain
 Between Angoria’s walls and yon tall mountains;
 That seem to reach the clouds; and now he comes,
 Loaden with spoils and conquest, to my aid.

[Flourish of trumpets.]

Zam. These trumpets speak his presence——

Enter Axalla, who kneels to Tamerlane.

Tam. Welcome! thou worthy partner of my laurels,
 Thou brother of my choice, a band more sacred
 Than nature’s brittle tie. By holy friendship,
 Glory and fame stood still for thy arrival;
 My soul seem’d wanting in its better half,
 And languish’d for thy absence; ‘ like a prophet,
 ‘ That waits the inspiration of his god.’

Ax. My emperor! My ever royal master!
 To whom my secret soul more lowly bends,
 Than forms of outward worship can express;
 How poorly does your soldier pay this goodness,
 Who wears his every hour of life out for you!
 Yet ’tis his all, and what he has he offers;

Nor now disdain t’accept the gift he brings,
Enter Selima, Monefes, Stratocles, prisoners; guards,
mutes, &c.

This earnest of your fortune. See, my lord,
 The noblest prize that ever grac’d my arms!
 Approach, my fair——

Tam. This is indeed to conquer,
 And well to be rewarded for thy conquest;
 The bloom of op’ning flow’rs, unfully’d beauty,
 Softness, and sweetest innocence she wears,
 And looks like nature in the world’s first spring.
 But say, Axalla——

Sel. Most renown’d in war, *[Kneeling to Tam.]*
 Look with compassion on a captive maid,
 Tho’ born of hostile blood; nor let my birth,
 Deriv’d from Bajazet, prevent that mercy

Which every subject of your fortune finds.
 War is the province of ambitious man,
 Who tears the miserable world for empire;
 Whilst our weak sex, incapable of wrong,
 On either side claims privilege of safety.

Tam. [*raising her.*] Rife, royal maid! the pride of haugh-
 Pays homage, not receives it, from the fair. [ty pow'r
 Thy angry father fiercely calls me forth,
 And urges me unwillingly to arms.
 Yet, tho' our frowning battles menace death
 And mortal conflict, think not that we hold
 Thy innocence and virtue as our foe.
 Here, till the fate of Asia is decided,
 In safety stay. To-morrow is your own.
 Nor grieve for who may conquer, or who lose;
 Fortune on either side shall wait thy wishes.

Sci. Where shall my wonder and my praise begin?
 From the successful labours of thy arms;
 Or from a theme more soft, and full of peace,
 Thy mercy and thy gentleness? Oh, Tamerlane!
 What can I pay thee for this noble usage,
 But grateful praise? So Heav'n itself is paid.
 Give peace, ye pow'rs above, peace to mankind;
 Nor let my father wage unequal war
 Against the force of such united virtues. [prospect

Tam. Heav'n hear thy pious wish!——But since our
 Looks darkly on futurity, till fate
 Determine for us, let thy beauty's safety
 Be my Axalla's care; in whose glad eyes
 I read what joy the pleasing service gives him.
 Is there amongst thy other pris'ners aught [To Axalla.
 Worthy our knowledge?

Ax. This brave man, my lord, [*Pointing to Mon.*
 With long resistance held the combat doubtful.
 His party, prest with numbers, soon grew faint,
 And would have left their charge an easy prey;
 Whilst he alone, undaunted at the odds,
 Tho' hopeless to escape, fought well and firmly;
 Nor yielded till, o'ermatch'd by many hands,
 He seem'd to shame our conquest, whilst he own'd it.

Tam. Thou speak'st him as a soldier should a soldier,
 Just to the worth he finds. I would not war [To Mon.

With aught that wears thy virtuous stamp of greatness.
 Thy habit speaks thee Christian—Nay, yet more,
 My soul seems pleas'd to take acquaintance with thee,
 As if ally'd to thine : perhaps 'tis sympathy
 Of honest minds ; like strings wound up in music,
 Where, by one touch, both utter the same harmony.
 Why art thou then a friend to Bajazet ?
 And why my enemy ?

Mon. If human wisdom
 Could point out every action of our lives,
 And say, Let it be thus, in spite of fate
 Or partial fortune, then I had not been
 The wretch I am.

Tam. The brave meet every accident
 With equal minds. Think nobler of thy foes,
 Than to account thy chance in war an evil.

Mon. Far, far from that : I rather hold it grievous
 That I was forc'd ev'n but to seem your enemy ;
 Nor think the baseness of a vanquish'd slave
 Moves me to flatter for precarious life,
 Or ill-bought freedom, when I swear, by Heav'n,
 Were I to choose from all mankind a master,
 It should be Tamerlane.

Tam. A noble freedom
 Dwells with the brave, unknown to fawning sycophants,
 And claims a privilege of being believ'd.
 I take thy praise as earnest of thy friendship.

Mon. Still you prevent the homage I should offer.
 Oh, royal Sir ! let my misfortunes plead,
 And wipe away the hostile mark I wore.
 I was, when not long since my fortune hail'd me,
 Bless'd to my wish, I was the prince Monefes,
 Born and bred up to greatness : witness the blood,
 Which through successive heroes veins, ally'd
 To our Greek emperors, roll'd down to me,
 Feeds the bright flame of glory in my heart.

Tam. Ev'n that, that princely tie, should bind thee to
 If virtue were not more than all alliance. [me,

Mon. I have a sister, Oh, severe remembrance !
 Our noble house's, nay, her sex's pride ;
 Nor think my tongue too lavish, if I speak her
 Fair as the fame of virtue, and yet chaste

As its cold precepts ; wise beyond her sex
 And blooming youth ; soft as forgiving mercy,
 Yet greatly brave, and jealous for her honour :
 Such as she was, to say I barely lov'd her,
 Is poor to my soul's meaning. From our infancy
 There grew a mutual tenderness between us,
 Till not long since her vows were kindly plighted
 To a young lord, the equal of her birth.
 The happy day was fix'd, and now approaching,
 When faithless Bajazet (upon whose honour,
 In solemn treaty given, the Greeks depended)
 With sudden war broke in upon the country,
 Secure of peace, and for defence unready.

Tam. Let majesty no more be held divine,
 Since kings, who are call'd Gods, profane themselves.

Mon. Among the wretches, whom that deluge swept
 Away to slavery, myself and sister,
 Then passing near the frontiers to the court,
 (Which waited for her nuptials) were surpris'd,
 And made the captives of the tyrant's pow'r.
 Soon as we reach'd his court, we found our usage
 Beyond what we expected, fair and noble ;
 'Twas then the storm of your victorious arms
 Look'd black, and seem'd to threaten, when he prest me
 (By oft repeating instances) to draw
 My sword for him : but when he found my soul
 Disdain'd his purpose, he more fiercely told me,
 That my Arpasia, my lov'd sister's fate,
 Depended on my courage shewn for him.
 I had long learnt to hold myself at nothing ;
 But for her sake, to ward the blow from her,
 I bound my service to the man I hated.
 Six days are past, since, by the sultan's order,
 I left the pledge of my return behind,
 And went to guard this princess to his camp :
 The rest the brave Axalla's fortune tells you.

Tam. Wisely the tyrant strove to prop his cause,
 By leagu'ing with thy virtue ; but just Heav'n
 Has torn thee from his side, and left him naked
 To the avenging bolt that drives upon him.
 Forget the name of captive, and I wish
 I could as well restore that fair one's freedom,

Whose loss hangs heavy on thee: yet ere night,
 Perhaps, we may deserve thy friendship nobler;
 Th' approaching storm may cast thy shipwreck'd wealth
 Back to thy arms: till that be past, since war
 ('Tho' in the justest cause) is ever doubtful,
 I will not ask thy sword to aid my victory,
 Lest it should hurt that hostage of thy valour
 Our common foe detains.

Mon. Let Bajazet
 Bend to his yoke repining slaves by force;
 You, Sir, have found a nobler way to empire,
 Lord of the willing world.

' *Tam.* Oh, my Axalla!
 ' Thou hast a tender soul, apt for compassion,
 ' And art thyself a lover and a friend.
 ' Does not this prince's fortune move thy temper?
 ' *Ax.* Yes, Sir, I mourn the brave Monefes' fate,
 ' The merit of his virtue hardly match'd
 ' With disadvent'rous chance: yet, prince, allow me,
 ' Allow me, from th' experience of a lover,
 ' To say, one person whom your story mention'd
 ' (If he survive) is far beyond you wretched:
 ' You nam'd the bridegroom of your beauteous sister.

' *Mon.* I did. Oh, most accurst!
 ' *Ax.* Think what he feels,
 ' Dash'd in the fierceness of his expectation:
 ' Then, when th' approaching minute of possession
 ' Had wound imagination to the height,
 ' Think if he lives!

' *Mon.* He lives! he does; 'tis true
 ' He lives! But how? To be a dog, and dead,
 ' Were Paradise to such a state as his:
 ' He holds down life, as children do a potion,
 ' With strong reluctance and convulsive strugglings,
 ' Whilst his misfortunes press him to disgorge it.

Tam. ' Spare the remembrance, 'tis an useless grief,
 ' And adds to the misfortune by repeating.
 ' The revolution of a day may bring
 ' Such turns, as Heav'n itself could scarce have promis'd,
 ' Far, far beyond thy wish: let that hope cheer thee.'
 Haste, my Axalla, to dispose with safety
 Thy beauteous charge, and on the foe revenge

The pain which absence gives ; thy other care,
 Honour and arms, now summon thy attendance.
 Now do thy office well, my soul ! Remember
 Thy cause, the cause of heaven and injur'd earth.
 O thou supreme ! if thy great spirit warms
 My glowing breast, and fires my soul to arms,
 Grant that my sword, assisted by thy pow'r,
 This day may peace and happiness restore,
 That war and lawless rage may vex the world no more. }

[*Exeunt* Tamerlane, Monefes, Stratocles, *prince of*
 Tanais, Zama, Mirvan, *and attendants.*

Ax. The battle calls, and bids me haste to leave thee ;
 Oh, Selima !——But let destruction wait.
 Are there not hours enough for blood and slaughter ?
 This moment shall be love's, and I will waste it
 In soft complainings, for thy sighs and coldness,
 For thy forgetful coldness ; even at Birza,
 When in thy father's court my eyes first own'd thee,
 Fairer than light, the joy of their beholding,
 Even then thou wert not thus.

' *Sel.* Art not thou chang'd,
 ' Christian Axalla ? Art thou still the same ?
 ' Those were the gentle hours of peace, and thou
 ' The world's good angel, that didst kindly join
 ' Its mighty masters in harmonious friendship :
 ' But since those joys that once were ours are lost,
 ' Forbear to mention 'em, and talk of war ;
 ' Talk of thy conquests and my chains, Axalla.

' *Ax.* Yet I will listen, fair, unkind upbraider,
 ' Yet I will listen to thy charming accents,
 ' Altho' they make me curse my fame and fortune,
 ' My laurel wreaths, and all the glorious trophies
 ' For which the valiant bleed—Oh, thou unjust one !
 ' Dost thou then envy me this small return
 ' My niggard fate has made for all the mournings,
 ' For all the pains, for all the sleepless nights,
 ' That cruel absence brings ?

' *Sel.* Away, deceiver !
 ' I will not hear thy soothing. Is it thus
 ' That Christian lovers prove the faith they swear ?
 ' Are war and slavery the soft endearments
 ' With which they court the beauties they admire ?

' 'Twas well my heart was cautious of believing
 ' Thy vows, and thy protesting. Know, my conqueror,
 ' Thy sword has vanquish'd but the half of Selima;
 ' Her soul disdains thy victory.

' *Ax.* Hear, sweet Heav'n!

' Hear the fair tyrant, how she wrests love's laws,
 ' As she had vow'd my ruin! What is conquest?
 ' What joy have I from that, but to behold thee,
 ' To kneel before thee, and with lifted eyes
 ' To view thee, as devotion does a saint,
 ' With awful, trembling pleasure; then to swear
 ' Thou art the queen and mistress of my soul?
 ' Has not ev'n Tamerlane (whose word, next Heaven's,
 ' Makes fate at second-hand) bid thee disclaim
 ' Thy fears? And dost thou call thyself a slave,
 ' Only to try how far the sad impression
 ' Can sink into Axalla?

' *Sel.* Oh, Axalla!

' Ought I to hear you?

' *Ax.* Come back, ye hours,
 ' And tell my Selima what she has done!
 ' Bring back the time, when to her father's court
 ' I came ambassador of peace from Tamerlane;
 ' When hid by conscious darkness and disguise,
 ' I past the dangers of the watchful guards,
 ' Bold as the youth who nightly swam the Hellespont:
 ' Then, then she was not sworn the foe of love;
 ' When, as my soul confest its flame, and su'd
 ' In moving sounds for pity, she frown'd rarely,
 ' But, blushing, heard me tell the gentle tale;
 ' Nay, ev'n confest, and told me softly, sighing,
 ' She thought there was no guilt in love like mine.'

Sel. Young, and unskilful in the world's false arts,
 I suffer'd love to steal upon my softness,
 And warm me with a lambent guiltless flame:
 Yes, I have heard thee swear a thousand times,
 And call the conscious pow'rs of Heav'n to witness
 The tend'rest, truest, everlasting passion.
 But, Oh! 'tis past; and I will charge remembrance
 To banish the fond image from my soul.
 Since thou art sworn the foe of royal Bajazet,
 I have resolv'd to hate thee.

Ax. Is it possible !
 Hate is not in thy nature ; thy whole frame
 Is harmony, without one jarring atom.
 Why dost thou force thy eyes to wear this coldness ?
 It damps the springs of life. Oh ! bid me die,
 Much rather bid me die, if it be true,
 That thou hast sworn to hate me.—

Sel. Let life and death
 Wait the decision of the bloody field ;
 Nor can thy fate, my conqueror, depend
 Upon a woman's hate. Yet, since you urge
 A power, which once perhaps I had, there is
 But one request that I can make with honour.

Ax. Oh, name it ! say !

Sel. Forego your right of war,
 And render me this instant to my father.

Ax. Impossible !—The tumult of the battle,
 That hastes to join, cuts off all means of commerce
 Betwixt the armies.

Sel. Swear then to perform it,
 Which way so'er the chance of war determines,
 On my first instance.

Ax. By the sacred majesty
 Of Heaven, to whom we kneel, I will obey thee ;
 Yes, I will give thee this severest proof
 Of my soul's vow'd devotion ; I will part with thee,
 (Thou cruel, to command it !) I will part with thee,
 As wretches that are doubtful of hereafter
 Part with their lives, unwilling, loth and fearful,
 And trembling at futurity. But is there nothing,
 No small return that honour can afford
 For all this waste of love ?

Sel. The gifts of captives
 ' Wear somewhat of constraint ; and generous minds
 ' Disdain to give, where freedom of the choice
 ' Does but seem wanting.

Ax. What ! not one kind look ? [**Trumpets.*
 Then thou art chang'd indeed. *Hark, I am summon'd,
 And thou wilt send me forth like one unblest'd,
 Whom fortune has forsaken, and ill fate
 ' Mark'd for destruction. ' Thy surprising coldness
 ' Hangs on my soul, and weighs my courage down ;

' And

‘ And the first feeble blow I meet shall raze me
 ‘ From all remembrance:’ nor is life or fame
 Worthy my care, since I am lost to thee. [Going.

Sel. Ha! Goeſt thou to the fight?—

Ax. I do.—Farewel!—

Sel. What! and no more! A ſigh heaves in my breast,
 And ſtops the ſtruggling accents on my tongue,
 Elſe, ſure, I ſhould have added ſomething more,
 And made our parting ſofter.

Ax. Give it way:
 The niggard honour that affords not love
 Forbids not pity—

‘ *Sel.* Fate perhaps has ſet
 ‘ This day the period of thy life and conqueſts;
 ‘ And I ſhall ſee thee borne at evening back,
 ‘ A breathleſs coarſe.—Oh! can I think on that
 ‘ And hide my ſorrows?—No—they will have way,
 ‘ And all the vital air that life draws in
 ‘ Is render’d back in ſighs.

‘ *Ax.* The murm’ring gale revives the drooping flame,
 ‘ That at thy coldneſs languish’d in my breast:
 ‘ So breathe the gentle zephyrs on the ſpring,
 ‘ And waken every plant, and od’rous flower,
 ‘ Which winter froſt had blaſted, to new life.

‘ *Sel.* To ſee thee for this moment, and no more.—
 ‘ Oh! help me to reſolve againſt this tenderneſs,
 ‘ That charms my fierce reſentments, and preſents thee
 ‘ Not as thou art, mine and my father’s foe,
 ‘ But as thou wert, when firſt thy moving accents
 ‘ Won me to hear; when, as I liſten’d to thee,
 ‘ The happy hours paſt by us unperceiv’d,
 ‘ So was my ſoul fix’d to the ſoft enchantment.

‘ *Ax.* Let me be ſtill the ſame; I am, I muſt be.’
 If it were poſſible my heart could ſtray,
 One look from thee would call it back again,
 And fix the wanderer for ever thine.

Sel. Where is my boaſted reſolution now?

[Sinking into his arms.

Oh, yes! thou art the ſame; my heart joins with thee,
 ‘ And to betray me will believe thee ſtill;
 ‘ It dances to the ſounds that mov’d it firſt,
 ‘ And owns at once the weakneſs of my ſoul:

‘ So

‘ So, when some skilful artist strikes the strings,
 ‘ The magic numbers rouse our sleeping passions,
 ‘ And force us to confess our grief, and pleasure.’

Alas! Axalla, say——dost thou not pity
 My artless innocence, and easy fondness?

Oh! turn thee from me, or I die with blushing.

Ax. No, let me rather gaze, for ever gaze,
 And bless the new-born glories that adorn thee;

‘ From every blush, that kindles in thy cheeks,

‘ Ten thousand little loves and graces spring

‘ To revel in the roses—’t wo’ not be,’ [Trumpets.

This envious trumpet calls, and tears me from thee——

Sel. My fears increase, and doubly press me now:
 I charge thee, if thy sword comes cross my father,
 Stop for a moment, and remember me.

Ax. Oh, doubt not but his life shall be my care,
 Ev’n dearer than my own——

Sel. Guard that for me too.

Ax. Oh, Selima! thou hast restor’d my quiet,
 The noble ardour of the war, with love
 Returning, brightly burns within my breast,
 And bids me be secure of all hereafter.

‘ So cheers some pious saint a dying sinner

‘ (Who trembled at the thought of pains to come)

‘ With Heaven’s forgiveness and the hopes of mercy:

‘ At length, the tumult of his soul appeas’d,

‘ And every doubt and anxious scruple eas’d,

‘ Boldly he proves the dark, uncertain road,

‘ The peace, his holy comforter bestow’d,

‘ Guides and protects him, like a guardian god.’ [Exit.]

Sel. In vain all arts a love-sick virgin tries,
 Affects to frown, and seem severely wise,

In hopes to cheat the wary lover’s eyes:

If the dear youth her pity strives to move,

And pleads, with tenderness, the cause of love,

Nature asserts her empire in her heart,

And kindly takes the faithful lover’s part.

By love herself, and nature thus betray’d,

No more she trusts in pride’s fantastic aid,

But bids her eyes confess the yielding maid.

[Exit Selima, guards following.]

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

SCENE, Tamerlane's *Camp*.*Enter Monefes.*

MONESES.

THE dreadful business of the war is o'er;
 And slaughter, that from yester morn 'till even,
 With giant steps, pass'd striding o'er the field,
 Besmear'd and horrid with the blood of nations,
 Now weary sits among the mangled heaps,
 And slumbers o'er her prey; while from this camp
 The chearful sounds of victory and Tamerlane
 Beat the high arch of Heav'n. ' Deciding Fate,
 ' That crowns him with the spoils of such a day,
 ' Has giv'n it as an earnest of the world
 ' That shortly shall be his.'

Enter Stratocles.

My Stratocles!

Most happily return'd; might I believe
 Thou bring'st me any joy?

Stra. With my best diligence,
 This night, I have enquir'd of what concerns you.
 Scarce was the sun, who shone upon the horror
 Of the past day, sunk to the western ocean,
 When, by permission from the prince Axalla,
 I mixt among the tumult of the warriors
 Returning from the battle: here a troop
 Of hardy Parthians, red with honest wounds,
 Confest the conquest they had well deserv'd:
 There a dejected crew of wretched captives,
 ' Sore with unprofitable hurts, and groaning
 ' Under new bondage,' follow'd sadly after
 The haughty victor's heels. But that which fully
 Crown'd the success of Tamerlane, was Bajazet,
 Fall'n, like the proud archangel, from the height
 Where once (even next to majesty divine)
 Enthron'd he sat, down to the vile descent
 And lowness of a slave: but, Oh! to speak
 The rage, the fierceness, and the indignation!
 It bars all words, and cuts description short.

Mon.

Mon. Then he is fall'n ! that comet which on high
Portended ruin ; he has spent his blaze,
And shall distract the world with fears no more.

' Sure it must bode me well ; for oft my soul
' Has started into tumult at his name,
' As if my guardian angel took th' alarm,
' At the approach of somewhat mortal to me.'

But say, my friend, what hear'st thou of Arpasia ?
For there my thoughts, my every care is center'd.

Stra. Tho' on that purpose still I bent my search,
Yet nothing certain could I gain, but this ;
That in the pillage of the sultan's tent
Some women were made pris'ners, who this morning
Were to be offer'd to the emperor's view ;
Their names and qualities, tho' oft enquiring,
I could not learn.

Mon. Then must my soul still labour
Beneath uncertainty and anxious doubt,
The mind's worst state. The tyrant's ruin gives me
But a half ease.

Stra. 'Twas said, not far from hence
The captives were to wait the emperor's passage.

Mon. Haste we to find the place. Oh, my Arpasia !
Shall we not meet ? ' Why hangs my heart thus heavy,
' Like death within my bosom ? Oh, 'tis well,
' The joy of meeting pays the pangs of absence,
' Else who could bear it ?

When thy lov'd sight shall bless my eyes again
Then I will own, I ought not to complain,
Since that sweet hour is worth whole years of pain.

[*Exeunt Monefes and Stratocles.*]

S C E N E, *the inside of a magnificent tent.*
Symphony of warlike music.

Enter Tamerlane, Axalla, Prince of Tanais, Zama,
Mirvan, soldiers and other attendants.

Ax. From this auspicious day the Parthian name
Shall date its birth of empire, and extend
Ev'n from the dawning east to utmost Thule,
The limits of its sway.

Pr. Nations unknown,
Where yet the Roman eagles never flew,

Shall

Shall pay their homage to victorious Tamerlane ;
 Bend to his valour and superior virtue,
 And own, that conquest is not given by chance,
 But, bound by fatal and resistless merit,
 Waits on his arms.

Tam. It is too much : you dress me,
 Like an usurper, in the borrow'd attributes
 Of injur'd Heaven. Can we call conquest ours ?
 Shall man, this pigmy, with a giant's pride,
 Vaunt of himself, and say, Thus have I done this ?
 Oh, vain pretence to greatness ! Like the moon,
 We borrow all the brightness which we boast,
 Dark in ourselves and useless. If that hand
 That rules the fate of battles, strike for us,
 Crown us with fame, and gild our clay with honour,
 'Twere most ungrateful to disown the benefit,
 And arrogate a praise which is not ours.

Ax. With such unshaken temper of the soul
 To bear the swelling tide of prosp'rous fortune,
 Is to deserve that fortune : in adversity
 The mind grows tough by buffeting the tempest,
 Which, in success dissolving, sinks to ease,
 And loses all her firmness.

Tam. Oh, Axalla !
 Could I forget I am a man, as thou art ;
 Would not the winter's cold, or summer's heat,
 Sicknefs, or thirst, and hunger, all the train
 Of nature's clamorous appetites, asserting
 An equal right in kings and common men,
 Reprove me daily ?—No—If I boast of aught,
 Be it, to have been Heaven's happy instrument,
 The means of good to all my fellow-creatures :
 This is a king's best praise.

Enter Omar.

Om. Honour and fame [*Bowing to Tamerlane.*
 For ever wait the emperor : may our prophet
 Give him ten thousand thousand days of life,
 And every day like this. The captive sultan,
 Fierce in his bonds and at his fate repining,
 Attends your sacred will.

Tam. Let him approach.

Enter

*Enter Bajazet, and other Turkish prisoners, in chains,
with a guard of soldiers.*

When I survey the ruins of this field,
The wild destruction which thy fierce ambition
Has dealt among mankind, (so many widows
And helpless orphans has thy battle made,
That half our eastern world this day are mourners)
Well may I, in behalf of Heav'n and earth,
Demand from thee atonement for this wrong.

Baj. Make thy demand to those that own thy pow'r,
Know, I am still beyond it; and tho' Fortune
(Curse on that changeling deity of fools!)
Has stript me of the train and pomp of greatness,
That outside of a king, yet still my soul,
Fix'd high, and of itself alone dependent,
Is ever free and royal, and ev'n now,
As at the head of battle, does defy thee.
I know what pow'r the chance of war has giv'n,
And dare thee to the use on't. This vile speeching,
This after-game of words, is what most irks me;
Spare that, and for the rest, 'tis equal all——
Be it as it may.

Tam. Well was it for the world,
When on their borders neighbouring princes met,
Frequent in friendly parle, by cool debates
Preventing wasteful war; such should our meeting
Have been, hadst thou but held in just regard
The sanctity of leagues so often sworn to.
Canst thou believe thy prophet, or, what's more,
That pow'r supreme which made thee and thy prophet,
Will, with impunity, let pass that breach
Of sacred faith giv'n to the royal Greek?

Baj. Thou pedant talker! ha! art thou a king,
Possess'd of sacred pow'r, Heav'n's darling attribute,
And dost thou prate of leagues, and oaths, and prophets?
I hate the Greek (perdition on his name!)
As I do thee, and would have met you both,
As death does human nature, for destruction.

Tam. Causeless to hate, is not of human kind:
The savage brute, that haunts in woods remote
And desert wilds, tears not the fearful traveller,
If hunger, or some injury, provoke not.

Baj. Can a king want a cause, when empire bids
Go on? What is he born for, but ambition?
It is his hunger, 'tis his call of nature,
The noble appetite which will be satisfy'd,
And, like the food of gods, makes him immortal.

Tam. Henceforth I will not wonder we were foes,
Since souls that differ so by nature hate,
And strong antipathy forbids their union.

Baj. The noble fire that warms me, does indeed
Transcend thy coldness. I am pleas'd we differ,
Nor think alike.

Tam. No—for I think like man,
Thou like a monster, from whose baleful presence
Nature starts back; and tho' she fix'd her stamp
On thy rough mass, and mark'd thee for a man,
Now, conscious of her error, she disclaims thee,
As form'd for her destruction.—
'Tis true, I am a king, as thou hast been:
Honour and glory too have been my aim;
But tho' I dare face death, and all the dangers
Which furious war wears in its bloody front,
Yet would I choose to fix my name by peace,
By justice, and by mercy; and to raise
My trophies on the blessings of mankind;
Nor would I buy the empire of the world
With ruin of the people whom I sway,
On forfeit of my honour.

Baj. Prophet, I thank thee.—
Damnation!—Couldst thou rob me of my glory,
To dress up this tame king, this preaching dervise?
Unfit for war, thou shouldst have liv'd secure
In lazy peace, and with debating senates
Shar'd a precarious sceptre, sat tamely still,
And let bold factions canton out thy pow'r,
And wrangle for the spoils they robb'd thee of;
Whilst I (curse on the power that stops my ardour!)
Would, like a tempest, rush amidst the nations,
Be greatly terrible, and deal, like Alha,
My angry thunder on the frightened world.

Tam. The world!—'twould be too little for thy pride:
Thou wouldst scale Heav'n——

Baj.

Baj. I would :—Away ! my soul
Disdains thy conference.

Tam. Thou vain, rash thing,
That, with gigantic insolence, hast dar'd
To lift thy wretched self above the stars,
And mate with pow'r almighty : thou art fall'n !

Baj. 'Tis false ! I am not fall'n from aught I have been ;
At least my soul resolves to keep her state,
And scorns to take acquaintance with ill fortune.

Tam. Almost beneath my pity art thou fall'n ;
Since, while th' avenging hand of Heav'n is on thee,
And presses to the dust thy swelling soul,
Fool-hardy, with the stronger thou contendest.
To what vast heights had thy tumultuous temper
Been hurry'd, if success had crown'd thy wishes :
Say, what had I to expect, if thou hadst conquer'd ?

Baj. Oh, glorious thought ! By Heav'n I will enjoy it,
Tho' but in fancy ; imagination shall
Make room to entertain the vast idea.

Oh ! had I been the master but of yesterday,
The world, the world had felt me ; and for thee,
I had us'd thee as thou art to me—a dog,
The object of my scorn and mortal hatred :
I would have taught thy neck to know my weight,
And mounted from that footstool to my saddle :
Then, when thy daily servile task was done,
I would have cag'd thee, for the scorn of slaves,
'Till thou hadst begg'd to die ; and ev'n that mercy
I had deny'd thee. Now thou know'st my mind,
And question me no farther.

Tam. Well dost thou teach me
What justice should exact from thee. Mankind,
With one consent, cry out for vengeance on thee ;
Loudly they call to cut off this league-breaker,
This wild destroyer, from the face of earth.

Baj. Do it, and rid thy shaking soul at once
Of its worst fear.

Tam. Why slept the thunder
That should have arm'd the idol deity,
And giv'n thee power, ere yester sun was set,
To shake the soul of Tamerlane. Hadst thou an arm
To make thee fear'd, thou shouldst have prov'd it on me,

Amidst the sweat and blood of yonder field,
When thro' the tumult of the war I fought thee,
Fenc'd in with nations.

Baj. Curse upon the stars
That fated us to different scenes of slaughter !
Oh ! could my sword have met thee——

Tam. Thou hadst then,
As now, been in my pow'r, and held thy life
Dependent on my gift—Yes, Bajazet,
I bid thee live—‘ so much my soul disdains
‘ That thou shouldst think I can fear aught but Heav’n :’
Nay more ; couldst thou forget thy brutal fierceness,
And form thyself to manhood, I would bid thee
Live, and be still a king, that thou may’st learn
What man should be to man, in war remembering
The common tie and brotherhood of kind.
This royal tent, with such of thy domestics
As can be found, shall wait upon thy service ;
Nor will I use my fortune to demand
Hard terms of peace, but such as thou may’st offer
With honour, I with honour may receive.

[*Tamerlane signs to an officer, who unbinds Bajazet.*]

Baj. Ha ! say’st thou—no—our prophet’s vengeance
blast me,

If thou shalt buy my friendship with thy empire.
Damnation on thee ! thou smooth fawning talker !
Give me again my chains, that I may curse thee,
And gratify my rage : or, if thou wilt
Be a vain fool, and play with thy perdition,
Remember I’m thy foe, and hate thee deadly.
Thy folly on thy head !

Tam. Be still my foe.
Great minds, like Heav’n, are pleas’d in doing good,
Tho’ the ungrateful subjects of their favours
Are barren in return. ‘ Thy stubborn pride,
‘ That spurns the gentle office of humanity,
‘ Shall in my honour own, and thy despite,
‘ I have done as I ought.’ Virtue still does
With scorn the mercenary world regard,
Where abject souls do good, and hope reward:

Above

Above the worthless trophies men can raise,
 She seeks not honours, wealth, nor airy praise,
 But with herself, herself the goddess pays.

[*Exeunt Tamerlane, Axalla, Prince of Tanais, Mirvan, Zama, and attendants.*]

Baj. Come, lead me to my dungeon; plunge me down
 Deep from the hated sight of man and day;
 Where, under covert of the friendly darkness,
 My soul may brood, at leisure, o'er its anguish.

Om. Our royal master wou'd with noble usage,
 Make your misfortunes light: he bids you hope—

Baj. I tell thee, slave, I have shook hands with hope,
 And all my thoughts are rage, despair, and horror.
 Ha! wherefore am I thus!—Perdition seize me!
 But my cold blood runs shiv'ring to my heart,
 As at some phantom, that in dead of night,
 With dreadful action, stalks around our beds.
 The rage and fiercer passions of my breast
 Are lost in new confusion.—

Enter Haly.

Arpasia!—Haly!

Ha. Oh, emperor! for whose hard fate our prophet
 And all the heroes of thy sacred race
 Are sad in Paradise, thy faithful Haly,
 The slave of all thy pleasures, in this ruin,
 This universal shipwreck of thy fortunes,

Enter Arpasia.

Has gather'd up this treasure for thy arms:
 Nor ev'n the victor, haughty Tamerlane,
 (By whose command once more thy slave beholds thee)
 Denies this blessing to thee, but with honour,
 Renders thee back thy queen, thy beauteous bride.

Baj. Oh! had her eyes with pity seen my sorrows,
 Had she the fondness of a tender bride,
 Heav'n cou'd not have bestow'd a greater blessing,
 And love had made amends for loss of empire.
 But see, what fury dwells upon her charms!
 What lightning flashes from her angry eyes!
 With a malignant joy she views my ruin:
 Even beauteous in her hatred, still she charms me,
 And awes my fierce tumultuous soul to love.

Arp. And dar'st thou hope, thou tyrant, ravisher!
That Heav'n has any joy in store for thee?
Look back upon the sum of thy past life,
Where tyranny, oppression, and injustice,
Perjury, murders, swell the black account;
Where lost Arpasia's wrongs stand bleeding fresh,
Thy last recorded crime. But Heav'n has found thee;
At length the tardy vengeance has o'erta'en thee.
My weary soul shall bear a little longer
The pain of life, to call for justice on thee:
That once complete, sink to the peaceful grave,
And lose the memory of my wrongs and thee.

Baj. Thou rail'st! I thank thee for it—Be perverse,
And muster all the woman in thy soul;
Goad me with curses, be a very wife,
That I may fling off this tame love, and hate thee.

Enter Monefes. [Bajazet starting.]

Ha! Keep thy temper, heart; nor take alarm
At a slave's presence.

Mon. It is Arpasia!—Leave me, thou cold fear.
Sweet as the rosy morn she breaks upon me;
And sorrow, like the night's unwholesome shade,
Gives way before the golden dawn she brings.

Baj. [Advancing towards him.] Ha, Christian! Is it
well that we meet thus?

Is this thy faith?

Mon. Why does thy frowning brow
Put on this storm of fury? Is it strange
We should meet here, companions in misfortune,
The captives of one common chance of war?
Nor shouldst thou wonder that my sword has fail'd
Before the fortune of victorious Tamerlane,
When thou, with nations like the fanded shore,
With half the warring world upon thy side,
Couldst not stand up against his dreadful battle,
That crush'd thee with its shock. Thy men can witness,
Those cowards that forsook me in the combat,
My sword was not unactive.

Baj. No,—'Tis false;
Where is my daughter, thou vile Greek? Thou hast
Betray'd her to the Tartar; or even worse,
Pale with thy fear, didst lose her like a coward;

And

And like a coward now, wouldst cast the blame
On fortune and ill stars.

Mon. Ha! saidst thou, like a coward?
What sanctity, what majesty divine
Hast thou put on, to guard thee from my rage,
That thus thou dar'st to wrong me?

Baj. Out, thou slave,
And know me for thy lord——

Mon. I tell thee, tyrant,
When in the pride of power thou sat'st on high,
When like an idol thou wert vainly worshipp'd
By prostrate wretches, born with slavish souls;
Ev'n when thou wert a king, thou wert no more
Nor greater than Monefes: born of a race
Royal and great as thine. What art thou now then?
The fate of war has set thee with the lowest;
And captives (like the subjects of the grave)
Losing distinction, serve one common lord.

Baj. Brav'd by this dog! Now give a loose to rage,
And curse thyself; curse thy false cheating prophet.
Ha! yet there's some revenge. Hear me, thou Christian!
Thou left'st that sister with me:—Thou impostor!
Thou boaster of thy honesty! Thou liar!
But take her to thee back.
Now to explore my prison—If it holds
Another plague like this, the restless damn'd
(If musties lie not) wander thus in hell;
From scorching flames to chilling frosts they run,
Then from their frosts to fires return again,
And only prove variety of pain.

[*Exeunt Bajazet and Haly.*]

Arp. Stay, Bajazet, I charge thee, by my wrongs,
Stay and unfold a tale of so much horror,
As only fits thy telling.—Oh, Monefes!

‘ *Mon.* Why dost thou weep? Why this tempestuous
passion,

‘ That stops thy salt’ring tongue short on my name?

‘ Oh, speak! unveil this mystery of sorrow,

‘ And draw the dismal scene at once to sight.

‘ *Arp.* Thou art undone, lost, ruin’d, and undone!

‘ *Mon.* I will not think ’tis so, while I have thee;

‘ While thus ’tis given to fold thee in my arms;

‘ For

‘ For while I sigh upon thy panting bosom,
 ‘ The sad remembrance of past woes is lost.

‘ *Arp.* Forbear to sooth thy soul with flatt’ring thoughts
 ‘ Of evils overpast, and joys to come :
 ‘ Our woes are like the genuine shade beneath,
 ‘ Where fate cuts off the very hopes of day,
 ‘ And everlasting night and horror reign.’

Mon. By all the tenderness and chaste endearments
 Of our past love, I charge thee, my Arpasia,
 To ease my soul of doubts ! Give me to know,
 At once, the utmost malice of my fate !

Arp. Take then thy wretched share in all I suffer,
 Still partner of my heart ! Scarce hadst thou left
 The sultan’s camp, when the imperious tyrant,
 Soft’ning the pride and fierceness of his temper,
 With gentle speech made offer of his love.
 Amaz’d, as at the shock of sudden death,
 I started into tears, and often urg’d
 (Tho’ still in vain) the difference of our faiths.
 At last, as flying to the utmost refuge,
 With lifted hands and streaming eyes, I own’d
 The fraud, which when we first were made his pris’ners,
 ‘ Conscious of my unhappy form, and fearing
 ‘ For thy dear life,’ I forc’d thee to put on ;
 Thy borrow’d name of brother, mine of sister ;
 Hiding between that veil the nearer tie
 Our mutual vows had made before the priest.
 Kindling to rage at hearing of my story,
 Then, be it so, he cry’d : Think’st thou thy vows,
 Giv’n to a slave, shall bar me from thy beauties ?
 Then bade the priest pronounce the marriage rites :
 Which he perform’d ; whilst, shrieking with despair,
 I call’d, in vain, the pow’rs of Heav’n to aid me.

Mon. Villain ! Imperial villain !—Oh, the coward !
 Aw’d by his guilt, tho’ back’d by force and power,
 He durst not, to my face, avow his purpose :
 But, in my absence, like a lurking thief,
 Stole on my treasure, and at once undid me.

Arp. Had they not kept me from the means of death,
 Forgetting all the rules of Christian suffering,
 I had done a desp’rate murder on my soul,
 Ere the rude slaves, that waited on his will,

Had

Had forc'd me to his——

Mon. Stop thee there, Arpasia,
And bar my fancy from the guilty scene!
Let not thought enter, lest the busy mind
Should muster such a train of monstrous images
As would distract me. Oh! I cannot bear it.
Thou lovely hoard of sweets, where all my joys
Were treasur'd up, to have thee rifled thus!
' Thus torn untasted from my eager wishes!
But I will have thee from him. Tamerlane
(The sovereign judge of equity on earth)
Shall do me justice on this mighty robber,
And render back thy beauties to Monefes.

Arp. And who shall render back my peace, my honour,
The spotless whiteness of my virgin soul?
Ah! no, Monefes—Think not I will ever
Bring a polluted love to thy chaste arms:
I am the tyrant's wife. Oh, fatal title!
And, in the sight of all the saints, have sworn,
By honour, womanhood, and blushing shame,
To know no second bride-bed but my grave.

' *Mon.* I swear it must not be, since still my eye
' Finds thee as heav'nly white, as angel pure,
' As in the earliest hours of life thou wert:
' Nor art thou his, but mine; thy first vow's mine,
' Thy soul is mine.——

Arp. ' Oh! think not, that the pow'r
' Of most persuasive eloquence can make me
' Forget I've been another's, been his wife.
' Now, by my blushes, by the strong confusion
' And anguish of my heart, spare me, Monefes,
' Nor urge my trembling virtue to the precipice.'
Shortly, Oh! very shortly, if my sorrows
Divine aright, and Heav'n be gracious to me,
Death shall dissolve the fatal obligation

' And give me up to peace, to that blest place
' Where the good rest from care and anxious life.

' *Mon.* Oh, teach me, thou fair saint, like thee to suf-
' Teach me, with hardy piety, to combat [fer!
' The present ills: instruct my eyes to pass
' The narrow bounds of life, this land of sorrow,
' And, with bold hopes, to view the realms beyond,
' Those

' Those distant beauties of the future state.
 ' Tell me, Arpasia—say, what joys are those
 ' That wait to crown the wretch who suffers here?
 ' Oh! tell me, and sustain my failing faith.
 ' *Arp.* Imagine somewhat exquisitely fine,
 ' Which fancy cannot paint, which the pleas'd mind
 ' Can barely know, unable to describe it;
 ' Imagine 'tis a tract of endless joys
 ' Without satiety or interruption;
 ' Imagine 'tis to meet, and part no more.
 ' *Mon.* Grant, gentle Heav'n, that such may be our
 ' Let us be blest together.—Oh, my soul! [lot!
 ' Build on that hope, and let it arm thy courage
 ' To struggle with the storm that parts us now.
 ' *Arp.* Yes, my Monefes! now the surges rise,
 ' The swelling sea breaks in between our barks,
 ' And drives us to our fate on different rocks.
 ' Farewel!—My soul lives with thee.—

Mon. Death is parting,
 'Tis the last sad adieu 'twixt soul and body.
 But this is somewhat worse—My joy, my comfort,
 All that was left in life, fleets after thee;
 ' My aking sight hangs on thy parting beauties,
 ' Thy lovely eyes, all drown'd in floods of sorrow.
 ' So sinks the setting sun beneath the waves,
 ' And leaves the traveller in pathless woods,
 ' Benighted and forlorn—Thus, with sad eyes,
 ' Westward he turns, to mark the light's decay,
 ' Till having lost the last faint glimpse of day,
 ' Chearless, in darkness, he pursues his way. }

[*Exeunt Monefes and Arpasia severally.*
 END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *The inside of the royal tent.*

Enter Axalla, Selima, and women attendants.

' AXALLA.

' CAN there be aught in love, beyond this proof,
 ' This wond'rous proof, I give thee of my faith?
 ' To tear thee from my bleeding bosom thus!

' To

- “ To rend the strings of life, to set thee free,
 “ And yield thee to a cruel father’s power,
 “ Foe to my hopes ! What canst thou pay me back ?
 “ What but thyself, thou angel ! for this fondness ?
 “ *Sel.* Thou dost upbraid me, beggar as I am,
 “ And urge me with my poverty of love.
 “ Perhaps thou think’st, ’tis nothing for a maid
 “ To struggle through the niceness of her sex,
 “ The blushes and the fears, and own she loves ;
 “ Thou think’st ’tis nothing for my artless heart
 “ To own my weakness, and confess thy triumph.
 “ *Ax.* Oh ! yes I own it ; my charm’d ears ne’er knew
 “ A sound of so much rapture, so much joy.
 “ Not voices, instruments, not warbling birds,
 “ Not winds, not murin’ring waters join’d in concert,
 “ Not tuneful nature, not th’according spheres
 “ Utter such harmony, as when my Selima,
 “ With down-cast looks and blushes, said—I love.—
 “ *Sel.* And yet thou say’st, I am a niggard to thee.
 “ I swear the balance shall be held between us,
 “ And love be judge, if after all the tendernefs,
 “ Tears and confusion of my virgin soul,
 “ Thou shouldst complain of aught, unjust Axalla !”
 “ *Ax.* Why was I ever blest !—Why is remembrance
 Rich with a thousand pleasing images
 Of past enjoyments, since ’tis but to plague me ?
 When thou art mine no more, what will it ease me
 To think of all the golden minutes past,
 To think that thou wert kind, and I was happy ?
 But like an angel fall’n from bliss, to curse
 My present state, and mourn the Heav’n I’ve lost.
 “ *Sel.* Hope better for us both ; nor let thy fears,
 Like an unlucky omen, cross my way.
 “ My father, rough and stormy in his nature,
 “ To me was always gentle, and, with fondness
 “ Paternal, ever met me with a blessing.
 “ Oft, when offence had stirr’d him to such fury,
 “ That not grave counsellors for wisdom fam’d,
 “ Nor hardy captains that had fought his battles,
 “ Presum’d to speak, but struck with awful dread
 “ Were hush’d as death ; yet has he smil’d on me,
 “ Kiss’d me, and bade me utter all my purpose,
 “ Till,

‘ Till, with my idle prattle, I had sooth’d him,
 ‘ And won him from his anger.

‘ *Ax.* Oh ! I know

‘ Thou hast a tongue to charm the wildest tempers.
 ‘ Herds would forget to graze, and savage beasts
 ‘ Stand still and lose their fierceness, but to hear thee,
 ‘ As if they had reflection, and by reason
 ‘ Forsook a less enjoyment for a greater.
 ‘ But, Oh ! when I revolve each circumstance,
 ‘ My Christian faith, my service closely bound
 ‘ To Tamerlane, my master and my friend,
 ‘ Tell me, my charmer, if my fears are vain ?
 ‘ Think what remains for me, if the fierce sultan
 ‘ Should doom thy beauties to another’s bed !’

Sel. ’Tis a sad thought ; but to appease thy doubts,
 Here, in the awful sight of Heav’n, I vow
 No pow’r shall e’er divide me from thy love,
 Ev’n duty shall not force me to be false.
 My cruel stars may tear thee from my arms,
 But never from my heart ; ‘ and when the maids
 ‘ Shall yearly come with garlands of fresh flow’rs,
 ‘ To mourn with pious office o’er my grave,
 ‘ They shall sit sadly down, and weeping tell
 ‘ How well I lov’d, how much I suffer’d for thee ;
 ‘ And while they grieve my fate, shall praise my constancy.’

Ax. But see, the sultan comes !—‘ My beating heart
 ‘ Bounds with exulting motion ; hope and fear
 ‘ Fight with alternate conquest in my breast.
 ‘ Oh ! can I give her from me ? Yield her up ?
 ‘ Now mourn, thou god of love, since honour triumphs,
 ‘ And crowns his cruel altars with thy spoils.’

Enter Bajazet.

Baj. To have a nauseous courtesy forc’d on me,
 Spite of my will, by an insulting foe !
 Ha ! they would break the fierceness of my temper,
 And make me supple for their slavish purpose.

Curse on their fawning arts ! ‘ From Heav’n itself
 ‘ I would not, on such terms, receive a benefit,
 ‘ But spurn it back upon the giver’s hand.’

Sel. My lord ! my royal father ! { *Sel. comes forward*

Baj. Ha ! what art thou ? { *and kneels to Baj.*

What heavenly innocence ! that in a form

So known, so lov'd, hast left thy Paradise,
For joyless prison, for this place of woe !
Art thou my Selima ?

Sel. Have you forgot me ?
Alas, my piety is then in vain !
Your Selima, your daughter whom you lov'd,
The fondling once of her dear father's arms,
Is come to claim her share in his misfortunes ;
' To wait and tend him with obsequious duty ;
' To sit and weep for every care he feels ;'
To help to wear the tedious minutes out,
To soften bondage, and the loss of empire.

Baj. Now, by our prophet, if my wounded mind
Could know a thought of peace, it would be now :
Ev'n from thy prating infancy thou wert
My joy, my little angel, ; smiling comfort
Came with thee still to glad me. Now I'm curs'd
Ev'n in thee too. Reproach and infamy
Attend the Christian dog t' whom thou wert trusted.
To see thee here—'twere better see thee dead !

Ax. Thus Tamerlane, to royal Bajazet,
With kingly greeting, sends : since with the brave
(The bloody bus'ness of the fight once ended)
Stern hate and opposition ought to cease ;
Thy queen already to thy arms restor'd,
Receive this second gift, thy beauteous daughter ;
And if there be aught farther in thy wish,
Demand with honour, and obtain it freely.

Baj. Bear back thy fulsome greeting to thy master ;
Tell him, I'll none on't. Had he been a god,
All his omnipotence could not restore
My fame diminish'd, loss of sacred honour,
The radiancy of majesty eclips'd :
For aught besides, it is not worth my care ;
The giver and his gifts are both beneath me.

Ax. Enough of war the wounded earth has known ;
' Weary at length, and wasted with destruction,
' Sadly she rears her ruin'd head, to shew
' Her cities humbled, and her countries spoil'd,
' And to her mighty masters sues for peace.'
Oh, sultan ! by the pow'r divine I swear,
With joy I wou'd resign the savage trophies

In blood and battle gain'd, could I atone
The fatal breach 'twixt thee and Tamerlane;
And think a soldier's glory well bestow'd
To buy mankind a peace.

Baj. And what art thou,
That dost presume to mediate 'twixt the rage
Of angry kings?

Ax. A prince, born of the noblest,
And of a soul that answers to that birth,
That dares not but do well. Thou dost put on
A forc'd forgetfulness, thus not to know me,
A guest so lately to thy court, then meeting
On gentler terms. —————

Sel. Could aught efface the merit
Of brave Axalla's name, yet when your daughter
Shall tell how well, how nobly she was us'd,
How light this gallant prince made all her bondage,
Most sure the royal Bajazet will own
That honour stands indebted to such goodness,
Nor can a monarch's friendship more than pay it.

Baj. Ha! know'st thou that, fond girl?—Go—'tis
not well;

And when thou could'st descend to take a benefit
From a vile Christian, and thy father's foe,
Thou didst an act dishonest to thy race:
Henceforth, unless thou mean'st to cancel all
My share in thee, and write thyself a bastard,
Die, starve, know any evil, any pain,
Rather than taste a mercy from these dogs.

Sel. Alas, Axalla!

Ax. Weep not, lovely maid!
I swear, 'one pearly drop from those fair eyes
'Would over-pay the service of my life!'
One sigh from thee has made a large amends
For all thy angry father's frowns and fierceness.

Baj. Oh, my curs'd fortune!—Am I fall'n thus low!
Dishonour'd to my face! Thou earth-born thing!
Thou clod! how hast thou dar'd to lift thy eyes
Up to the sacred race of mighty Ottoman,
Whom kings, whom e'en our prophet's holy offspring
At distance have beheld? And what art thou?
What glorious titles blazon out thy birth?

Thou

Thou vile obscurity ! ha !—say— thou base one.

Ax. Thus challeng'd, virtue, modest as she is,
 Stands up to do herself a common justice ;
 To answer, and assert that in-born merit,
 That worth, which conscious to herself she feels.
 Were honour to be scann'd by long descent
 From ancestors illustrious, I could vaunt
 A lineage of the greatest, and recount
 Among my fathers names of ancient story,
 Heroes and god-like patriots, who subdu'd
 The world by arms and virtue, and, being Romans,
 Scorn'd to be kings ; but that be their own praise :
 Nor will I borrow merit from the dead,
 Myself an undeserver. I could prove
 My friendship such, as thou might'st deign t'accept
 With honour, when it comes with friendly office,
 To render back thy crown and former greatness ;
 ' And yet e'en this, e'en all is poor, when Selima,
 ' With matchless worth, weighs down the adverse scale.'

Baj. To give me back what yesterday took from me,
 Wou'd be to give like Heav'n, when having finish'd
 This world (the goodly work of his creation)
 He bid his favourite man be lord of all.

But this——

Ax. Nor is this gift beyond my pow'r.
 Oft has the mighty master of my arms
 Urg'd me, with large ambition, to demand
 Crowns and dominions from his bounteous pow'r :
 'Tis true, I wav'd the proffer, and have held it
 The worthier choice to wait upon his virtues,
 To be the friend and partner of his wars,
 Than to be Asia's lord. Nor wonder then,
 If in the confidence of such a friendship,
 I promise boldly, for the royal giver,
 Thy crown and empire.

Baj. For our daughter thus
 Mean'st thou to barter ? Ha ! I tell thee, Christian,
 There is but one, one dowry thou canst give,
 And I can ask, worthy my daughter's love.

Ax. Oh ! name the mighty ransom ; task my pow'r ;
 Let there be danger, difficulty, death,
 T' enhance the price.

Baj. I take thee at thy word.
Bring me the Tartar's head.

Ax. Ha!

Baj. Tamerlane's!
That death, that deadly poison to my glory.

Ax. Prodigious! Horrid!

Sel. Lost! for ever lost!

Baj. And cou'dst thou hope to bribe me with aught else?
With a vile peace, patch'd up on slavish terms?
With tributary kingship?—No!—To merit
A recompence from me, fate my revenge.
The Tartar is my bane, I cannot bear him:
One heav'n and earth can never hold us both;
Still shall we hate, and with defiance deadly
Keep rage alive, till one be lost for ever:
As if two suns should meet in the meridian,
And strive in fiery combat for the passage.
Weep'st thou, fond girl? Now as thy king and father,
I charge thee, drive this slave from thy remembrance!
Hate shall be pious in thee. * Come and join
To curse thy father's foes. [* *Laying hold on her hand.*

* *Sel.* Undone for ever!

* Now, tyrant duty, art thou yet obeyed?

* There is no more to give thee. Oh, Axalla!

* [*Bajazet leads out Selima, she looking back on Axalla.*

* *Ax.* 'Tis what I fear'd; fool that I was t'obey!

* The coward love, that could not bear her frown,

* Has wrought his own undoing. Perhaps e'en now

* The tyrant's rage prevails upon her fears:

* Fiercely he storms; she weeps, and sighs, and trembles,

* But swears at length to think on me no more.

* He bade me take her.—But, Oh, gracious honour!

* Upon what terms? My soul yet shudders at it,

* And stands but half recover'd of her fright.

* The head of Tamerlane! monstrous impiety!

* Bleed, bleed to death, my heart, be virtue's martyr.

* Oh, emperor! I own I ought to give thee

* Some nobler mark, than dying, of my faith.

* Then let the pains I feel my friendship prove,

* 'Tis easier far to die, than cease to love. [*Exit Axalla.*

SCENE,

SCENE, Tamerlane's camp.

Enter severally Monefes, and Prince of Tanais.

Mon. If I not press untimely on his leisure,
 ' You would much bind a stranger to your service,
 ' To give me means of audience from the emperor.
Pr. Most willingly; tho' for the present moment:
 ' We must intreat your stay; he holds him private.

Mon. His council, I presume?

Pr. No, the affair
 ' Is not of earth, but Heav'n — A holy man,
 ' (One whom our prophet's law calls such) a dervise,
 ' Keeps him in conference.

Mon. Hours of religion,
 ' Especially of princes, claim a reverence,
 ' Nor will be interrupted.

Pr. What his bus'ness
 ' Imports we know not; but with earnest suit,
 ' This morn', he begg'd admittance. Our great master
 ' (Than whom none bows more lowly to high Heav'n)
 ' In reverend regard holds all that bear
 ' Relation to religion, and, on notice
 ' Of his request, receiv'd him on the instant.

Mon. We will attend his pleasure. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter Tamerlane and a Dervise.

Tam. Thou bring'st me thy credentials from the highest,
 From Alba, and our prophet. Speak thy message,
 It must import the best and noblest ends.

Der. Thus speaks our holy Mahomet, who has giv'n
 To reign and conquer: Ill dost thou repay [thee]
 The bounties of his hand, unmindful of
 The fountain whence thy streams of greatness flow.
 Thou hast forgot high Heav'n, hast beaten down
 And trampled on religion's sanctity.

Tam. Now, as I am a soldier and a king,
 (The greatest names of honour) do but make
 Thy imputation out, and Tamerlane
 Shall do thee ample justice on himself.
 So much the sacred name of Heaven awes me,
 Cou'd I suspect my soul of harbouring aught
 To its dishonour, I would search it strictly,
 And drive th'offending thought with fury forth.

Der. Yes, thou hast hurt our holy prophet's honour,
By fostering the pernicious Christian sect;
Those, whom his sword pursu'd with fell destruction,
Thou tak'st into thy bosom, to thy councils;
They are thy only friends. The true believers
Mourn to behold thee favour this Axalla.

Tam. I fear me, thou out-go'st the prophet's order,
And bring'st his venerable name to shelter
A rudeness ill-becoming thee to use,
Or me to suffer. When thou nam'st my friend,
Thou nam'st a man beyond a monk's discerning,
Virtuous and great, a warrior and a prince.

Der. He is a Christian; there our law condemns him,
Altho' he were ev'n all thou speak'st, and more.

Tam. 'Tis false; no law divine condemns the virtuous,
For differing from the rules your schools devise.
Look round, how Providence bestows alike
Sunshine and rain, to bless the fruitful year,
On different nations, all of diff'rent faiths;
And (tho' by several names and titles worshipp'd)
Heav'n takes the various tribute of their praise;
Since all agree to own, at least to mean,
One best, one greatest, only lord of all:

' Thus, when he view'd the many forms of nature,
' He found that all was good, and blest the fair variety.'

Der. Most impious and profane!—Nay, frown not,
Full of the prophet, I despise the danger [prince;
Thy angry power may threaten. I command thee
To hear and to obey; since thus says Mahomet:
Why have I made thee dreadful to the nations?
Why have I giv'n thee conquest; but to spread
My sacred law ev'n to the utmost earth,
And make my holy Mecca the world's worship?
Go on, and wheresoe'er thy arms shall prosper,
Plant there the prophet's name; with sword and fire
Drive out all other faiths, and let the world
Confess him only.

Tam. Had he but commanded
My sword to conquer all, to make the world
Know but one lord, the task were not so hard;
'Twere but to do what has been done already;
And Philip's son, and Cæsar did as much;

But to subdue th' unconquerable mind,
To make one reason have the same effect
Upon all apprehensions ; to force this
Or this man, just to think as thou and I do ;
Impossible ! unless souls were alike
In all, which differ now like human faces.

Der. Well might the holy cause be carry'd on,
If Mussulmen did not make war on Mussulmen.
Why hold'st thou captive a believing monarch ?
Now, as thou hop'st to 'scape the prophet's curse,
Release the royal Bajazer, and join,
With force united, to destroy the Christians.

Tam. 'Tis well—I've found the cause that mov'd thy
What shallow politician set thee on, [zeal,
In hopes to fright me this way to compliance ?

Der. Our prophet only ———

Tam. No—thou dost belie him,
Thou maker of new faiths ! that dar'st to build
Thy fond inventions on religion's name.
Religion's lustre is, by native innocence,
Divinely pure, and simple from all arts ;
You daub and dress her like a common mistress,
The harlot of your fancies : and by adding
False beauties, which she wants not, make the world
Suspect her angel's face is foul beneath,
And wo'not bear all lights. Hence ! I have found thee.

Der. I have but one resort. Now aid me, prophet. [*Aside.*
Yet I have somewhat further to unfold ;
Our prophet speaks to thee in thunder—* thus ———

[* *The Dervise draws a conceal'd dagger, and offers
to stab Tamerlane.*

Tam. No, villain, Heav'n is watchful o'er its wor-
shippers, [*Wresting the dagger from him.*
And blasts the murderer's purpose. Think, thou wretch !
Think on the pains that wait thy crime, and tremble
When I shall doom thee ———

Der. 'Tis but death at last ;
And I will suffer greatly for the cause
That urg'd me first to the bold deed.

Tam. Oh, impious !
Enthusiasm thus makes villains martyrs.

[*Pausing.*] It shall be so—To die ! 'twere a reward—

Now

Now learn the difference 'twixt thy faith and mine :
 Thine bids thee lift thy dagger to my throat ;
 Mine can forgive the wrong, and bid thee live.
 Keep thy own wicked secret, and be safe ;
 If thou repent'st, I have gain'd one to virtue,
 And, am, in that, rewarded for my mercy ;
 If thou continu'st still to be the same,
 'Tis punishment enough to be a villain.
 Hence ! from my sight — It shocks my soul to think
 That there is such a monster in my kind. [*Exit Dervise.*
 Whither will man's impiety extend ?
 Oh, gracious Heav'n ! dost thou withhold thy thunder,
 When bold assassins take thy name upon 'em,
 And swear they are the champions of thy cause ?

Enter Monefes.

Mon. Oh, Emperor ! before whose awful throne
 Th' afflicted never kneel in vain for justice, } *Kneeling*
 Undone, and ruin'd, blasted in my hopes, } *to Tam.*
 Here let me fall before your sacred feet,
 And groan out my misfortunes, till your pity,
 (The last support and refuge that is left me)
 Shall raise me from the ground, and bid me live.

Tam. Rise, prince, nor let me reckon up thy worth,
 And tell how boldly that might bid thee ask,
 Lest I should make a merit of my justice,
 The common debt I owe to thee, to all,
 Ev'n to the meanest of mankind, the charter
 By which I claim my crown, and Heav'n's protection.
 Speak, then, as to a king, the sacred name
 Where pow'r is lodg'd, for righteous ends alone.

Mon. One only joy, one blessing, my fond heart
 Had fix'd its wishes on, and that is lost ;
 That sister, for whose safety my sad soul
 Endur'd a thousand fears —

Tam. I well remember,
 When, ere the battle join'd, I saw thee first,
 With grief uncommon to a brother's love,
 Thou told'st a moving tale of her misfortunes,
 Such as bespoke my pity. Is there aught
 Thou canst demand from friendship ? Ask and have it.

Mon. First, Oh ! let me intreat your royal goodness ;
 Forgive the folly of a lover's caution,

That

That forg'd a tale of folly to deceive you.
 Said I, she was my sister?—Oh! 'tis false;
 She holds a dearer interest in my soul,
 ' Such as the closest ties of blood ne'er knew;
 ' An interest, such as power, wealth and honour
 ' Can't buy, but love, love only, can bestow;
 She was the mistress of my vows, my bride,
 By contract mine; and long ere this the priest
 Had ty'd the knot for ever, had not Bajazet——

Tam. Ha! Bajazet!—If yet his pow'r withholds
 The cause of all thy sorrows, all thy fears,
 E'en gratitude for once shall gain upon him,
 Spite of his savage temper, to restore her.
 This morn' a foldier brought a captive beauty,
 Sad tho' she seem'd, yet of a form most rare,
 By much the noblest spoil of all the field;
 E'en Scipio, or a victor yet more cold,
 Might have forgot his virtue at her sight.
 Struck with a pleasing wonder, I beheld her,
 Till, by a slave that waited near her person,
 I learn'd she was the captive sultan's wife:
 Strait I forbid my eyes the dangerous joy
 Of gazing long, and sent her to her lord.

Mon. There was Monefes lost. Too sure my heart
 (From the first mention of her wond'rous charms)
 Presag'd it cou'd be only my Arpasia.

Tam. Arpasia! did'st thou say?

Mon. Yes, my Arpasia.

Tam. Sure I mistake, or fain I would mistake thee;
 I nam'd the queen of Bajazet, his wife.

Mon. His queen! his wife! He brings that holy title
 To varnish o'er the monstrous wrongs he has done me.

Tam. Alas! I fear me, prince, thy griefs are just;
 Thou art, indeed, unhappy——

Mon. Can you pity me,
 And not redress? * Oh, royal Tamerlane! [**Kneeling.*
 Thou succour of the wretched, reach thy mercy
 To save me from the grave, and from oblivion;
 Be gracious to the hopes that wait my youth.
 ' Oh! let not sorrow blast me, lest I wither,
 ' And fall in vile dishonour.' Let thy justice
 Restore me my Arpasia; give her back,

Back to my wishes, to my transports give her,
 To my fond, restless, bleeding, dying bosom.
 Oh! give her to me yet while I have life
 To bless thee for the bounty. Oh, Arpasia!

Tam. Unhappy, royal youth, why dost thou ask
 What honour must deny? Ha! is she not
 His wife, whom he has wedded, whom enjoy'd?
 And would'st thou have my partial friendship break
 That holy knot, which ty'd once, all mankind
 Agree to hold sacred and undissolveable?
 The brutal violence would stain my justice,
 And brand me with a tyrant's hated name
 To late posterity.

Mon. Are then the vows,
 The holy vows we register'd in Heav'n,
 But common air?

Tam. Could thy fond love forget
 The violation of a first enjoyment?——
 But sorrow has disturb'd and hurt thy mind.

Mon. Perhaps it has, and like an idle madman,
 That wanders with a train of hooting boys,
 I do a thousand things to shame my reason.
 Then let me fly, and bear my follies with me,
 Far, far from the world's sight. Honour and fame,
 Arms and the glorious war shall be forgotten;
 No noble sound of greatness, or ambition,
 Shall wake my drowsy soul from her dead sleep,
 Till the last trump do summon.

Tam. Let thy virtue
 Stand up and answer to these warring passions,
 That vex thy manly temper. From the moment
 When first I saw thee, something wond'rous noble
 Shone thro' thy form, and won my friendship for thee,
 Without the tedious form of long acquaintance;
 Nor will I lose thee poorly for a woman.
 Come, droop no more, thou shalt with me pursue
 True greatness, till we rise to immortality.
 Thou shalt forget these lesser cares, Monefes;
 Thou shalt, and help me to reform the world.

Mon. ' So the good genius warns his mortal charge
 ' To fly the evil fate that still pursues him.
 ' Till it have wrought his ruin.' Sacred Tamerlane,

Thy

Thy words are as the breath of angels to me.
But, Oh ! too deep the wounding grief is fix'd,
For any hand to heal.

Tam. This dull despair,
Is the soul's laziness. Rouse to the combat,
And thou art sure to conquer. War shall restore thee;
The sound of arms shall wake thy martial ardour,
And cure this amorous sickness of thy soul,
' Begun by sloth, and nurs'd by too much ease;
' The idle god of love supinely dreams,
' Amidst inglorious shades and purling streams.
' In rosy fetters and fantastic chains,
' He binds deluded maids and simple swains ;
' With soft enjoyments woos them to forget
' The hardy toils and labours of the great.
' But if the warlike trumpet's loud alarms
' To virtuous acts excite, and manly arms,
' The coward boy avows his abject fear,
' On filken wings sublime he cuts the air,
' Scar'd at the noble noise and thunder of the war. }

* *The boy, fond Love,*
Is nurs'd and bred in sloth, and too much ease ;
Near purling streams, in gloomy shades, he lies,
And loosely there, instructs his votaries,
Honour and active virtue to despise.
But if the trumpets echo from afar,
On filken wings sublime he cuts the air,
Scar'd at the noise and clangor of the war. }

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

* The lines printed in Italics have been altered from the original, and are given to the reader as delivered in the representation at Drury-lane Theatre.

ACT

A C T IV.

SCENE, Bajazet's tent.

Enter Haly and the Dervise.

HALY.

TO 'scape with life from an attempt like this,
Demands my wonder justly.

Der. True, it may ;

But 'tis a principle of his new faith ;
'Tis what his Christian favourites have inspir'd,
Who fondly make a merit of forgiveness,
And give their foes a second opportunity,
If the first blow should miss.—Failing to serve
The sultan to my wish, and e'en despairing
Of further means t' effect his liberty,
A lucky accident retriev'd my hopes.

Ha. The prophet and our master will reward
Thy zeal in their behalf ; but speak thy purpose.

Der. Just ent'ring here I met the Tartar general,
Fierce Omar.

Ha. He commands, if I mistake not,
This quarter of the army, and our guards.

Der. The same. By his stern aspect, and the fires
That kindled in his eyes, I guess'd the tumult
Some wrong had rais'd in his tempestuous soul ;
A friendship of old date had giv'n me privilege
To ask of his concerns. In short, I learn'd,
That burning for the sultan's beauteous daughter,
He had begg'd her, as a captive of the war,
From Tamerlane ; but meeting with denial
Of what he thought his services might claim,
Loudly he storms, and curses the Italian,
As cause of this affront. I join'd his rage,
And added to his injuries the wrongs
Our prophet daily meets with from Axalla.
But see, he comes. Improve what I shall tell,
And all we wish is ours. [*They seem to talk together aside.*]

Enter Omar.

Om. No———if I forgive it,
Dishonour blast my name ! Was it for this

That

That I directed his first steps to greatness,
 Taught him to climb, and made him what he is?
 ' When our great Cam first bent his eyes towards him,
 ' (Then petty prince of Parthia) and, by me
 ' Persuaded, rais'd him to his daughter's bed,
 ' Call'd him his son, and successor of empire;
 Was it for this, that like a rock I stood
 And stemm'd a torrent of our Tartar lords,
 Who scorn'd his upstart sway? When Calibes,
 In bold rebellion, drew e'en half the provinces
 To his own cause, I, like his better angel,
 Stook by his shaking throne, and fix'd it fast;
 And am I now so lost to his remembrance,
 That, when I ask a captive, he shall tell me,
 She is Axalla's right, his Christian minion?

Der. Allow me, valiant Omar, to demand,
 Since injur'd thus, why right you not yourself?
 The prize you ask is in your power.

Om. It is,
 And I will seize it, in despite of Tamerlane
 And that Italian dog.

Ha. What need of force,
 When every thing concurs to meet your wishes?
 Our mighty master would not wish a son
 Nobler than Omar. From a father's hand
 Receive that daughter, which ungrateful Tamerlane
 Has to your worth deny'd.

Om. Now, by my arms,
 It will be great revenge. What will your sultan
 Give to the man that shall restore his liberty,
 His crown, and give him pow'r to wreak his hatred
 Upon his greatest foe?

Ha. All he can ask,
 And far beyond his wish.— [Trumpets.

Om. These trumpets speak
 The emperor's approach; he comes once more
 To offer terms of peace. Retire within.
 I will no farther—he grows deadly to me;
 And curse me, prophet, if I not repay
 His hate, with retribution full as mortal. [Exeunt.

SCENE *draws, and discovers Arpasia lying on a couch.*

S O N G.

To thee, Oh, gentle sleep, alone
 Is owing all our peace ;
 By thee our joys are heighten'd shown,
 By thee our sorrows cease.
 The nymph, whose hand, by fraud or force,
 Some tyrant has possess'd,
 By thee, obtaining a divorce,
 In her own choice is bless'd.
 Oh, stay ! Arpasia bids thee stay ;
 The sadly weeping fair
 Conjures thee, not to lose in day
 The object of her care.
 To grasp whose pleasing form she sought,
 That motion chas'd her sleep ;
 Thus by ourselves are oft'nest wrought
 The griefs for which we weep.

Arp. Oh, death ! thou gentle end of human sorrows,
 Still must my weary eye-lids vainly wake,
 In tedious expectation of thy peace ?
 Why stand thy thousand thousand doors still open,
 To take the wretched in, if stern religion
 Guards every passage, and forbids my entrance ?—
 Lucrece could bleed, and Portia swallow fire,
 When urg'd with griefs beyond a mortal sufferance ;
 But here it must not be. Think then, Arpasia,
 Think on the sacred dictates of thy faith,
 And let that arm thy virtue to perform
 What Cato's daughter durst not—Live, Arpasia,
 And dare to be unhappy.

Enter Tamerlane.

Tam. When fortune smiles upon the foldier's arms,
 And adds e'en beauty to adorn his conquest,
 Yet she ordains, the fair should know no fears,
 ' No sorrows to pollute their lovely eyes,
 ' But should be us'd e'en nobly, as herself,
 ' The queen and goddess of the warrior's vows.'—
 Such welcome as a camp can give, fair sultaneſs,
 We hope you have receiv'd ; it shall be larger,
 And better as it may.

Arp.

Arp. Since I have borne
That miserable mark of fatal greatness,
I have forgot all difference of conditions;
Scepters and fetters are grown equal to me,
And the best change my fate can bring is death.

Tam. ' When sorrow dwells in such an angel form,
' Well may we guess that those above are mourners;
' Virtue is wrong'd, and bleeding innocence
' Suffers some wond'rous violation here,
' To make the saints look sad.' Oh! teach my power
To cure those ills which you unjustly suffer,
Lest Heav'n should wrest it from my idle hand,
If I look on, and see you weep in vain.

Arp. Not that my soul disdains the generous aid
Thy royal goodness proffers; but, Oh, emperor!
It is not in my fate to be made happy;
Nor will I listen to the coz'ner, hope,
But stand resolv'd to bear the beating storm
That roars around me; safe in this alone,
That I am not immortal.—Tho' 'tis hard,
'Tis wond'rous hard, when I remember thee,
(Dear native Greece!) and you, ye weeping maids,
That were companions of my virgin youth!
My noble parents! Oh, the grief of heart,
The pangs, that for unhappy me, bring down
Their reverend ages to the grave with sorrow.
And yet there is a woe surpassing all:
Ye saints and angels, give me of your constancy,
If you expect I shall endure it long.

Tam. Why is my pity all that I can give
To tears like yours? And yet I fear 'tis all;
Nor dare I ask what mighty loss you mourn,
Lest honour should forbid to give it back.

Arp. No, Tamerlane, nor did I mean thou should'st.
But know (tho' to the weakness of my sex
I yield these tears) my soul is more than man.
Think, I am born a Greek, nor doubt my virtue;
' A Greek! from whose fam'd ancestors of old
' Rome drew the patterns of her boasted heroes.
They must be mighty evils that can vanquish
A Spartan courage, and a Christian faith.

Enter Bajazet.

Baj. To know no thought of rest ! to have the mind
Still ministring fresh plagues, as in a circle,
Where one dishonour treads upon another ;
What know the fiends beyond it ?—Ha ! by hell,
[*Seeing Arp. and Tam.*

There wanted only this to make me mad.
Comes he to triumph here ; to rob me of my love,
And violate the last retreat of happiness ?

Tam. But that I read upon thy frowning brow,
That war yet lives, and rages in thy breast ;
Once more (in pity to the suff'ring world)
I meant to offer peace.—

Baj. And mean'st thou too
To treat it with our empress ; and to barter
The spoils which fortune gave thee for her favours ?

Arp. What would the tyrant ? [Aside.

Baj. Seek'st thou thus our friendship ?
Is this the royal usage thou didst boast ?

Tam. The boiling passion that disturbs thy soul,
Spreads clouds around, and makes thy purpose dark—
Unriddle what thy mystic fury aims at.

Baj. Is it a riddle ? Read it there explain'd ;
There, in my shame. Now judge me thou, Oh, prophet,
And equal Heav'n, if this demand not rage !
The peasant-hind, begot and born to slavery,
Yet dares assert a husband's sacred right,
And guards his homely couch from violation :
And shall a monarch tamely bear the wrong
Without complaining ?

Tam. If I could have wrong'd thee,
If conscious virtue, and all-judging Heav'n,
Stood not between, to bar ungovern'd appetite,
What hinder'd, but in spite of thee, my captive,
I might have us'd a victor's boundless power,
And satiated every wish my soul could form ?
But, to secure thy fears, know, Bajazet,
This is among the things I dare not do. [sent ?

Baj. By hell, 'tis false ! else wherefore art thou pre-
What cam'st thou for, but to undo my honour ;
I found thee holding amorous parley with her,
Gazing and glotting on her wanton eyes,

And

And bargaining for pleasures yet to come :
 My life, I know, is the devoted price—
 But take it, I am weary of the pain.

Tam. Yet ere thou rashly urge my rage too far,
 I warn thee to take heed : I am a man,
 And have the frailties common to man's nature ;
 The fiery feeds of wrath are in my temper,
 And may be blown up to so fierce a blaze
 As wisdom cannot rule. Know, thou hast touch'd me
 Ev'n in the nicest, tender'st part, my honour ;
 My honour ! which, like pow'r, disdains being question'd ;
 Thy breath has blasted my fair virtue's fame,
 And mark'd me for a villain and a tyrant.

Arp. And stand I here, an idle looker-on,
 To see my innocence murder'd and mangled
 By barbarous hands, nor can revenge the wrong ?
 Art thou a man, and dar'st thou use me thus ? [To Baj.
 Hast thou not torn me from my native country,
 From the dear arms of my lamenting friends,
 From my soul's peace, and from my injur'd love ?
 Hast thou not ruin'd, blotted me for ever,
 And driv'n me to the brink of black despair ?
 And is it in thy malice yet to add
 A wound more deep, to fully my white name,
 My virtue ?——

Baj. Yes, thou hast thy sex's virtues,
 Their affectation, pride, ill-nature, noise,
 Proneness to change, e'en from the joy that pleas'd 'em :
 So gracious is your idol, dear variety,
 That for another love you would forego
 An angel's form, to mingle with a devil's ;
 ' Through ev'ry state and rank of men you wander,
 ' 'Till e'en your large experience takes in all
 ' The different nations of the peopled earth.' [tribe

Arp. Why fought'st thou not from thy own impious
 A wife like one of these ? ' For such thy race
 ' (If human nature brings forth such) affords.
 ' Greece, for chaste virgins fam'd, and pious matrons,
 ' Teems not with monsters, like your Turkish wives,
 ' Whom guardian eunuchs, haggard and deform'd,
 ' Whom walls and bars make honest by constraint.'
 Know, I detest, like hell, the crime thou mention'st :

Not that I fear, or reverence thee, thou tyrant ;
 But that my soul, conscious of whence it sprung,
 Sits unpolluted in its sacred temple,
 And scorns to mingle with a thought so mean.

Tam. Oh, pity ! that a greatness so divine
 Should meet a fate so wretched, so unequal. —
 Thou, blind and wilful to the good that courts thee,
 [To Bajazet.

With open-handed bounty Heav'n pursues thee,
 And bids thee (undeserving as thou art,
 And monstrous in thy crimes) be happy yet ;
 Whilst thou, in fury, dost avert the blessing,
 And art an evil genius to thyself.

Baj. No—Thou, thou art my greatest curse on earth !
 Thou, who hast robb'd me of my crown and glory,
 And now pursu'st me to the verge of life,
 To spoil me of my honour. Thou ! thou hypocrite !
 That wear'st a pageant outside shew of virtue,
 To cover the hot thoughts that glow within !
 Thou rank adulterer !

Tam. Oh, that thou wert
 The lord of all those thousands that lie breathless
 On yonder field of blood, that I again
 Might hunt the face of death and danger,
 Through the tumultuous battle, and there force thee,
 Vanquish'd and sinking underneath my arm,
 To own thou hast traduc'd me like a villain.

Baj. Ha ! does it gall thee, Tartar ? By revenge,
 It joys me much to find thou feel'st my fury.
 Yes, I will echo to thee, thou adulterer !
 Thou dost profane the name of king and soldier,
 And, like a ruffian bravo, cam'st with force
 To violate the holy marriage-bed.

Tam. Wert thou not shelter'd by thy abject state,
 The captive of my sword, by my just anger,
 My breath, like thunder, should confound thy pride,
 And doom thee dead, this instant, with a word. [not.

Baj. 'Tis false ! my fate's above thee, and thou dar'st

Tam. Ha ! dare not ! Thou hast rais'd my pond'rous
 And now it falls to crush thee at a blow. [rage,
 A guard there ! — * Seize and drag him to his fate !

[* Enter a guard, they seize Bajazet.
 Tyrant,

Tyrant, I'll do a double justice on thee;
At once revenge myself, and all mankind.

Baj. Well dost thou, ere thy violence and lust
Invade my bed, thus to begin with murder:
Drown all thy fears in blood, and sin securely.

Tam. Away!

Arp. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, stay! I charge thee, by renown;
By that bright glory thy great soul pursues,
Call back the doom of death!

Tam. Fair injur'd excellence,
Why dost thou kneel, and waste such precious pray'rs,
'As might e'en bribe the saints to partial justice,'
For one to goodness lost; who first undid thee,
Who still pursues and aggravates the wrong?

Baj. By Alha! no—I will not wear a life
Bought with such vile dishonour.—Death shall free me
At once from infamy, and thee, thou traitress!

Arp. No matter, tho' the whistling winds grow loud,
And the rude tempest roars, 'tis idle rage:
Oh! mark it not; but let thy steady virtue
Be constant to its temper. Save his life,
And save Arpasia from the sport of talkers.
Think, how the busy, meddling world will toss
Thy mighty name about, in scurril mirth;
Shall brand thy vengeance, as a foul design,
And make such monst'rous legends of our lives,
As late posterity shall blush in reading.

Tam. Oh, matchless virtue! Yes, I will obey;
Tho' laggard in the race, admiring yet,
I will pursue the shining path thou tread'st.
Sultan, be safe! Reason resumes her empire,

[*The guards release Bajazet.*

And I am cool again.—Here break we off,
Lest farther speech should minister new rage.
Wisely from dangerous passions I retreat,
To keep a conquest which was hard to get:
And, Oh! 'tis time I should for flight prepare,
A war more fatal seems to threaten there,
And all my rebel-blood assists the fair:
One moment more, and I too late shall find,
That love's the strongest pow'r that lords it o'er the mind.

[*Exit Tamerlane, followed by the guards.*
Baj.

Baj. To what new shame, what plague am I reserv'd !
 ' Why did my stars refuse me to die warm,
 ' While yet my regal state stood unimpeach'd,
 ' Nor knew the curse of having one above me ?
 ' Then too (altho' by force I grasp'd the joy)
 ' My love was safe, nor felt the rack of doubt.'
 Why hast thou forc'd this nauseous life upon me ?
 Is it to triumph o'er me ?—But I will,
 I will be free, I will forget thee all ;
 The bitter and the sweet, the joy and pain,
 Death shall expunge at once, and ease my soul.
 Prophet, take notice, I disclaim thy Paradise,
 Thy fragrant bow'rs, and everlasting shades ;
 Thou hast plac'd woman there, and all thy joys are taint-
 ed. [Exit Bajazet.

Arp. A little longer yet, be strong, my heart ;
 A little longer let the busy spirits
 Keep on their chearful round.—It wo' not be !
 ' Love, sorrow, and the sting of vile reproach,
 ' Succeeding one another in their course,
 ' Like drops of eating water on the marble,
 ' At length have worn my boasted courage down :
 ' I will indulge the woman in my soul,
 ' And give a loose to tears and to impatience ;'
 Death is at last my due, and I will have it.—
 And see, the poor Monefes comes, to take
 One sad adieu, and then we part for ever.

Enter Monefes.

Mon. Already am I onward of my way,
 Thy tuneful voice comes like a hollow sound
 At distance, to my ears. My eyes grow heavy,
 And all the glorious lights of Heav'n look dim ;
 'Tis the last office they shall ever do me,
 To view thee once, and then to close and die.

Arp. Alas, how happy have we been, Monefes !
 Ye gentle days, that once were ours, what joys
 Did every chearful morning bring along !
 No fears, no jealousies, no angry parents,
 That for unequal births, or fortunes, frown'd ;
 But love, that kindly join'd our hearts, to bless us,
 Made us a blessing too to all besides.

Mon.

Mon. Oh, cast not thy remembrance back, Arpasia!
'Tis grief unutterable; 'tis distraction!

'But let this last of hours be peaceful sorrow!'

Here let me kneel, and pay my latest vows.

Be witness, all ye saints, thou Heav'n and Nature,

Be witness of my truth, for you have known it!

Be witness, that I never knew a pleasure,

In all the world could offer, like Arpasia!

Be witness, that I liv'd but in Arpasia!

And, Oh, be witness, that her loss has kill'd me!

Arp. While thou art speaking, life begins to fail,
And every tender accent chills like death.

Oh! let me haste then, yet, ere day declines

And the long night prevail, once more to tell thee

What, and how dear, Monefes has been to me.

What has he not been?—All the names of love,

Brothers, or fathers, husbands, all are poor;

Monefes is myself; in my fond heart,

E'en in my vital blood, he lives and reigns;

The last dear object of my parting soul

Will be Monefes; the last breath that lingers

Within my panting breath, shall sigh, Monefes.

Mon. It is enough! Now to thy rest, my soul,
The world and thou have made an end at once.

Arp. Fain wou'd I still detain thee, hold thee still:

Nor honour can forbid, that we together

Should share the poor few minutes that remain;

I swear, methinks this sad society

Has somewhat pleasing in it.—Death's dark shades

Seem, as we journey on, to lose their horror;

At near approach the monsters, form'd by fear,

Are vanish'd all, and leave the prospect clear;

Amidst the gloomy vale, a pleasing scene,

With flow'rs adorn'd, and never-fading green,

Inviting stands, to take the wretched in:

No wars, no wrongs, no tyrants, no despair,

Disturb the quiet of a place so fair,

But injur'd lovers find Elysium there.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Bajezet, Omar, Haly and the Dervise.

Baj. Now, by the glorious tomb that shrines our pro-
By Mecca's sacred temple, here I swear, [phet,

Our daughter is thy bride! and to that gift

Such

Such wealth, such pow'r, such honours will I add,
That monarchs shall with envy view thy state,
And own thou art a demy-god to them.
Thou hast giv'n me what I wish'd, power of revenge,
And when a king rewards, 'tis ample retribution.

Om. Twelve Tartar lords, each potent in his tribe,
Have sworn to own my cause, and draw their thousands,
To-morrow, from the ungrateful Parthian's side :
The day declining, seems to yield to night,
Ere little more than half her course be ended.
In an auspicious hour, prepare for flight ;
The leaders of the troops thro' which we pass,
Rais'd by my pow'r, devoted to my service,
Shall make our passage secret and secure.

Der. Already, mighty sultan, art thou safe,
Since, by yon passing torches' light, I guess,
To his pavilion Tamerlane retires,
Attended by a train of waiting courtiers.
All who remain within these tents are thine,
And hail thee, as their lord.——

Ha ! the Italian prince,
With sad Monefes, are not yet gone forth.

Baj. Ha ! with our queen and daughter !

Om. They are ours :
I mark'd the slaves, who waited on Axalla ;
They, when the emperor past out, prest on,
And mingled with the crowd, nor miss'd their lord :
He is your pris'ner, Sir : I go this moment,
To seize, and bring him to receive his doom.

[*Exit Omar.*

Baj. Haste, Haly, follow, and secure the Greek :
Him too I wish to keep within my power. [*Exit Haly.*

Der. If my dread lord permit his slave to speak,
I would advise to spare Axalla's life,
Till we are safe beyond the Parthian's power :
Him, as our pledge of safety, may we hold ;
And, could you gain him to assist your flight,
It might import you much.

Baj. Thou counsell'st well ;
And tho' I hate him (for he is a Christian,
And to my mortal enemy devoted)

Yet,

Yet, to secure my liberty and vengeance,
I wish he now were ours.

Der. And see, they come.

Fortune repents; again she courts your side,
And, with this first fair offering of success,
She wooes you to forget her crime of yesterday.

Enter Omar, with Axalla prisoner, Selima following weeping.

Ax. I wo' not call thee villain; 'tis a name
Too holy for thy crime. To break thy faith,
And turn a rebel to so good a master,
Is an ingratitude unmatched on earth.
The first revolting angel's pride cou'd only
Do more than thou hast done. Thou copy'st well,
And keep'st the black original in view.

Om. Do rage, and vainly call upon thy master
To save his minion. My revenge has caught thee,
And I will make thee curse that fond presumption
That set thee on to rival me in aught.

Baj. Christian, I hold thy fate at my disposal!
One only way remains to mercy open;
Be partner of my flight and my revenge,
And thou art safe. Thy other choice is death.

Om. What means the sultan?

Der. I conjure you, hold——
Your rival is devoted to destruction: [*Aside to Omar.*
Nor would the sultan now defer his fate,
But for our common safety.—Listen further. [*Whispers.*

Ax. Then briefly thus. Death is the choice I make;
Since, next to Heav'n, my master and my friend
Has interest in my life, and still shall claim it.

Baj. Then take thy wish—Call in our mates!

Sel. My father,
If yet you have not sworn to cast me off,
And turn me out, to wander in misfortune;
If yet my voice be gracious in your ears;
If yet my duty and my love offend not,
Oh, call your sentence back, and save Axalla!

Baj. Rise, Selima! The slave deserves to die,
Who durst, with fullen pride, refuse my mercy:
Yet, for thy sake, once more I offer life.

Sel. Some angel whisper to my anxious soul,

What shall I do to save him.—‘ Oh, Axalla !

‘ Is it so easy to thee, to forsake me ?

‘ Canst thou resolve, with all this cold indifference,

‘ Never to see me more ? To leave me here

‘ The miserable mourner of thy fate,

‘ Condemn’d to waste my widow’d virgin youth,

‘ My tedious days and nights, in lonely weeping,

‘ And never know the voice of comfort more ?

‘ *Ax.* Search not too deep the sorrows of my breast :

‘ Thou say’st, I am indifferent and cold.

‘ Oh ! is it possible my eyes should tell

‘ So little of the fighting storm within ?

‘ Oh ! turn thee from me ; save me from thy beauties ;

‘ Falshood and ruin all look lovely there,

‘ Oh ! let my lab’ring soul yet struggle thro’——

‘ I will—I would resolve to die, and leave thee.

‘ *Baj.* Then let him die !—He trifles with my favour.

‘ I have too long attended his resolves.

‘ *Sel.* Oh ! stay a minute, yet a minute longer ; [*To Baj.*

‘ A minute is a little space in life.

‘ There is a kind consenting in his eyes,

‘ And I shall win him to your royal will.’

Oh, my Axalla ! seem but to consent.—[*To Axalla aside.*

Unkind and cruel, will you then do nothing ?

I find I am not worth thy least of cares.

Ax. Oh ! labour not to hang dishonour on me !

I could bear sickness, pain and poverty,

Those mortal evils worse than death, for thee.

But this—It has the force of fate against us,

And cannot be.

Sel. See, see, Sir ! he relents ; [*To Bajazet.*

Already he inclines to own your cause.

A little longer, and he is all yours.

Baj. Then mark, how far a father’s fondness yields.

Till midnight I defer the death he merits,

And give him up till then, to thy persuasion.

If by that time he meets my will, he lives ;

If not, thyself shall own he dies with justice.

Ax. ’Tis but to lengthen life upon the rack.

I am resolv’d already.

Sel. Oh ! be still,

Nor rashly urge a ruin on us both ;

’Tis

'Tis but a moment more I have to save thee.
 Be kind, auspicious Alha, to my pray'r;
 More for my love, than for myself, I fear;
 Neglect mankind a while, and make him all thy care!

[*Exeunt Axalla and Selima.*]

Baj. Monefes—is that dog secur'd?

Om. He is.

Baj. 'Tis well—My soul perceives returning greatness,
 As nature feels the spring. Lightly she bounds,
 And shakes dishonour, like a burden, from her;
 Once more imperial, awful, and herself.
 So, when of old, Jove from the Titans fled,
 Ammon's rude front his radiant face bely'd,
 And all the majesty of Heav'n lay hid.
 At length, by fate, to pow'r divine restor'd,
 His thunder taught the world to know its lord,
 The god grew terrible again, and was again ador'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE, Bajazet's tent.

ARPASIA.

SURE 'tis a horror more than darkness brings,
 That sits upon the night! Fate is abroad;
 Some ruling fiend hangs in the dusky air,
 And scatters ruin, death, and wild distraction,
 O'er all the wretched race of man below.
 Not long ago, a troop of ghastly slaves
 Rush'd in, and forc'd Monefes from my sight;
 Death hung so heavy on his drooping spirits,
 That scarcely could he say—Farewel—for ever!
 And yet, methinks, some gentle spirit whispers,
 Thy peace draws near, Arpasia, sigh no more!
 And see, the king of terrors is at hand;
 His minister appears.

Enter Bajazet and Haly.

Baj. [*aside to Haly.*] The rest I leave
 To thy dispatch. For, Oh! my faithful Haly,
 Another care has taken up thy master.

F

Spite

Spite of the high-wrought tempest in my soul,
 Spite of the pangs which jealousy has cost me,
 This haughty woman reigns within my breast;
 ' In vain I strive to put her from my thoughts,
 ' To drive her out, with empire and revenge.
 ' Still she comes back, like a retiring tide,
 ' That ebbs a while, but strait returns again,
 ' And swells above the beach.'

Ha. Why wears my lord.

An anxious thought for what his pow'r commands?
 When, in an happy hour, you shall, ere long,
 Have borne the empress from amidst your foes,
 She must be yours, be only and all yours.

Baj. On that depends my fear. Yes, I must have her;
 I own, I will not, cannot, go without her.

' But such is the condition of our flight,
 ' That should she not consent, 'twould hazard all
 ' To bear her hence by force, Thus I resolve then,
 ' By threats and pray'rs, by every way, to move her;
 ' If all prevail not, force is left at last;
 ' And I will set life, empire, on the venture,
 ' To keep her mine'—Be near to wait my will.

[*Exit Haly.*

When last we parted, 'twas on angry terms;
 Let the remembrance die, or kindly think
 That jealous rage is but a hasty flame,
 That blazes out, when love too fiercely burns.

Arp. For thee to wrong me, and for me to suffer,
 Is the hard lesson that my soul has learnt,
 And now I stand prepar'd for all to come:
 Nor is it worth my leisure to distinguish
 If love or jealousy commit the violence;
 Each have alike been fatal to my peace,
 Confirming me a wretch, and thee a tyrant.

Baj. Still to deform thy gentle brow with frowns,
 And still to be perverse, it is a manner
 Abhorrent from the softness of thy sex:
 Women, like summer storms, a while are cloudy,
 Burst out in thunder, and impetuous show'rs;
 But strait, the sun of beauty dawns abroad,
 And all the fair horizon is serene.

Arp. Then, to retrieve the honour of my sex,

Here I disclaim that changing and inconstancy:
To thee I will be ever as I am.

Baj. Thou say'st I am a tyrant; think so still,
And let it warn thy prudence to lay hold
On the good hour of peace, that courts thee now.
Souls form'd like mine brook being scorn'd but ill.
Be well advis'd, and profit by my patience;
It is a short-liv'd virtue.

Arp. Turn thy eyes
Back on the story of my woes, barbarian!
Thou that hast violated all respects
Due to my sex and honour of my birth.
Thou brutal ravisher, 'that hast undone me,
'Ruin'd my love!' Can I have peace with thee?
Impossible! First heav'n and hell shall join,
They only differ more.

Baj. I see, 'tis vain
To court thy stubborn temper with endearments.
Resolve, this moment, to return my love,
And be the willing partner of my flight,
Or, by the prophet's holy law, thou dy'st.

Arp. And dost thou hope to fright me with the phantom
Death? 'Tis the greatest mercy thou canst give;
So frequent are the murders of thy reign,
One day scarce passing by unmark'd with blood,
That children, by long use, have learnt to scorn it.
Know, I disdain to aid thy treach'rous purpose,
And should'st thou dare to force me, with my cries
I will call heav'n and earth to my assistance.

Baj. Confusion! dost thou brave me? But my wrath
Shall find a passage to thy swelling heart,
And rack thee worse than all the pains of death.
That Grecian dog, the minion of thy wishes,
Shall be dragg'd forth, and butcher'd in thy sight;
Thou shalt behold him when his pangs are terrible;
Then, when he stares, and gasps, and struggles strongly,
'Ev'n in the bitterest agony of dying;
'Till thou shalt rend thy hair, tear out thy eyes,
And curse thy pride, while I applaud my vengeance.

Arp. Oh, fatal image! All my pow'rs give way,
And resolution sickens at the thought;
'A flood of passion rises in my breast,
'And labours fiercely upward to my eyes.'

Come, all ye great examples of my sex,
 Chaste virgins, tender wives, and pious matrons ;
 ‘ Ye holy martyrs, who, with wond’rous faith
 ‘ And constancy unshaken, have susta’n’d
 ‘ The rage of cruel men, and fiery persecution,’
 Come to my aid, and teach me to defy
 The malice of this fiend ! I feel, I feel
 Your sacred spirit arm me to resistance.
 Yes, tyrant, I will stand this shock of fate ;
 Will live to triumph o’er thee, for a moment,
 Then die well pleas’d, and follow my Monefes.

Baj. Thou talk’st it well. But talking is thy privilege ;
 ‘Tis all the boasted courage of thy sex ;
 Tho’, for thy soul, thou dar’st not meet the danger.

Arp. By all my hopes of happiness I dare !——
 ‘ My soul is come within her ken of Heav’n ;
 ‘ Charm’d with the joys and beauties of that place,
 ‘ Her thoughts and all her cares she fixes there,
 ‘ And ’tis in vain for thee to rage below :
 ‘ Thus stars shine bright, and keep their place above,
 ‘ Tho’ ruffling winds deform this lower world.’

Baj. This moment is the trial.

Arp. Let it come !

This moment then shall shew I am a Greek,
 And speak my country’s courage in my suff’ring.

Baj. Here, mercy, I disclaim thee ! Mark me, traitress !
 My love prepares a victim to thy pride,
 And when it greets thee next, ’twill be in blood. [*Ex. Baj.*

Arp. My heart beats higher, and my nimble spirits
 Ride swiftly thro’ their purple channel round.

‘ ’Tis the last blaze of life. Nature revives,
 ‘ Like a dim winking lamp, that flashes brightly
 ‘ With parting light, and straight is dark for ever.’

And see, my last of sorrows is at hand ;

Death and Monefes come together to me ;

As if my stars, that had so long been cruel,

Grew kind at last, and gave me all I wish.

*Enter Monefes, guarded by some mutes ; others attending
 with a cup of poison, and a bow-string.*

Mon. I charge ye, O ye ministers of fate !

Be swift to execute your master’s will ;

Bear me to my Arpasia ; let me tell her,

The

The tyrant is grown kind. He bids me go,
 And die beneath her feet. 'A joy shoots thro'
 ' My drooping breast; as often when the trumpet
 ' Has call'd my youthful ardour forth to battle,
 ' High in my hopes, and ravish'd with the sound,
 ' I have rush'd eager on amidst the foremost,
 ' To purchase victory, or glorious death.'

Arp. If it be happiness, alas! to die,
 To lie forgotten in the silent grave,
 To love and glory lost, and from among
 The great Creator's works expung'd and blotted,
 Then, very shortly, shall we both be happy.

Mon. There is no room for doubt; 'tis certain bliss.
 The tyrant's cruel violence, thy loss,
 Already seem more light; nor has my soul
 One unrepented guilt upon remembrance,
 To make me dread the justice of hereafter;
 But standing now on the last verge of life,
 Boldly I view the vast abyss eternity,
 Eager to plunge, and leave my woes behind me.

Arp. By all the truth of our past loves, I vow,
 To die appears a very nothing to me.
 ' But, Oh, Monefs! should I not allow
 ' Somewhat to love, and to my sex's tenderness?'
 This very now I could put off my being
 Without a groan; but to behold thee die!——
 Nature shrinks in me at the dreadful thought,
 Nor can my constancy sustain this blow.

Mon. Since thou art arm'd for all things after death,
 Why should the pomp and preparation of it
 Be frightful to thy eyes? There's not a pain,
 Which age or sickness brings, the least disorder
 That vexes any part of this fine frame,
 But's full as grievous. All that the mind feels
 Is much, much more.—And see, I go to prove it.

Enter a Mute; he signs to the rest, who proffer a bow-string to Monefs.

Arp. Think, ere we part!

Mon. Of what?

Arp. Of something soft,
 Tender and kind, of something wond'rous sad.
 Oh, my full soul!

Mon. My tongue is at a loss ;
Thoughts croud so fast, thy name is all I've left,
My kindest, truest, dearest, best Arpasia !

[The mutes struggle with him.]

Arp. I have a thousand thousand things to utter,
A thousand more to hear yet. Barbarous villains !
Give me a minute. Speak to me, Monefes !

Mon. Speak to thee ? 'Tis the business of my life,
'Tis all the use I have for vital air.

Stand off, ye slaves ! To tell thee that my heart
Is full of thee ; that, even at this dread moment,
My fond eyes gaze with joy and rapture on thee ;
Angels, and light itself, are not so fair——

Enter Bajazet, Haly, and attendants.

Baj. Ha ! wherefore lives this dog ? Be quick, ye
And rid me of the pain. [slaves !]

Mon. For only death,
And the last night, can shut out my Arpasia.

[The mutes strangle Monefes.]

Arp. Oh, dismal ! 'tis not to be borne ! Ye moralists !
Ye talkers ! what are all your precepts now ?
Patience ! Distraction ! Blast the tyrant, blast him,
Avenging lightnings ! Snatch him hence, ye fiends !
Love ! Death ! Monefes ! ' Nature can no more ;
' Ruin is on her, and she sinks at once. *[She sinks down.]*

' *Baj.* Help, Haly ! raise her up, and bear her out.

' *Ha.* Alas ! she faints.

' *Arp.* No, tyrant, 'tis in vain.

' Oh ! I am now beyond thy cruel pow'r ;

' The peaceful slumber of the grave is on me :

' Ev'n all the tedious day of life I've wander'd,

' Bewilder'd with misfortunes :

' At length 'tis night, and I have reach'd my home,

' Forgetting all the toils and troubles past,

' Weary I'll lay me down, and sleep, till—— Oh !'

[She dies.]

Baj. Fly, ye slaves,
And fetch me cordials. No, she shall not die !
Spite of her sullen pride, I'll hold in life,
And force her to be blest against her will.

Ha. Already 'tis beyond the power of art ;
For, see, a deadly cold has froze the blood,

The pliant limbs grow stiff, and lose their use,
 And all the animating fire is quench'd:
 Ev'n beauty too is dead; an ashy pale
 Grows o'er the roses; the red lips have lost
 Their fragrant hue, for want of that sweet breath,
 That blest 'em with its odours as it past.

Baj. Can it be possible? Can rage and grief,
 Can love and indignation be so fierce,
 So mortal, in a woman's heart? Confusion!
 Is she escap'd then? What is royalty,
 If those that are my slaves, and should live for me,
 Can die, and bid defiance to my power?

Enter the Dervise.

Der. The valiant Omar sends to tell thy greatness
 The hour of flight is come, and urges haste;
 Since he descries, near Tamerlane's pavilion,
 Bright troops of crouding torches, who from thence,
 On either hand, stretch far into the night,
 And seem to form a shining front of battle.
 Behold, ev'n from this place thou may'st discern them.

[Looking out.]

Baj. By Alha, yes! they cast a day around 'em,
 And the plain seems thick set with stars, as Heav'n.
 Ha! or my eyes are false, they move this way;
 'Tis certain so. Fly, Haly, to our daughter. *[Exit Haly.]*
 Let some secure the Christian prince Axalla:
 We will begone this minute.

Enter Omar.

Om. Lost! undone!

Baj. What mean'st thou?

Om. All our hopes of flight are lost.
 Mirvan and Zaina, with the Parthian horse,
 Inclose us round, they hold us in a toil.

Baj. Ha! whence this unexpected curse of chance?

Om. Too late I learnt, that early in the night
 A slave was suffer'd, by the princess' order,
 To pass the guard. I clove the villain down
 Who yielded to his flight; but that's poor vengeance.
 That fugitive has rais'd the camp upon us,
 And unperceiv'd, by favour of the night,
 In silence they have march'd to intercept us.

Baj. My daughter! Oh, the traitress!

Der.

Der. Yet, we have
Axalla in our power, and angry Tamerlane
Will buy his fav'rite's life on any terms.

Om. With those few friends I have, I for a while
Can face their force: if they refuse us peace,
Revenge shall sweeten ruin, 'and 'twill joy me,
'To drag my foe down with me in my fall.' [*Exit Om.*
Enter Haly, with Selima weeping.

Baj. See where she comes, with well dissembled inno-
With truth and faith so lovely in her face, [cence;
As if she durst e'en disavow the falshood. —
Hop'st thou to make amends with trifling tears,
For my lost crown, and disappointed vengeance?
Ungrateful Selima! thy father's curse!
Bring forth the minion of her foolish heart;
He dies this moment. —

Ha. Would I could not speak
The crime of fatal love! The slave who fled,
By whom we are undone, was that Axalla.

Baj. Ha! say'st thou?

Ha. Hid beneath that vile appearance,
The princess found a means for his escape.

Sel. I am undone! ev'n nature has disclaim'd me!
My father! have I lost you all? My father!

Baj. Talk'st thou of nature, who hast broke her bands!
Thou art my bane, thou witch, thou infant parricide!
But I will study to be strangely cruel;
I will forget the folly of my fondness;
Drive all the father from my breast; now snatch thee,
Tear thee to pieces, drink thy treacherous blood,
And make the answer all my great revenge!
Now, now, thou traitress! [*Offers to kill her.*

Sel. Plunge the poignard deep! [*She embraces him.*
The life my father gave shall hear his summons,
And issue at the wound——' Start not to feel
'My heart's warm blood gush out upon your hands;
Since from your spring I drew the purple stream,
And I must pay it back, if you demand it. [*weakness.*

Baj. Hence, from my thoughts, thou soft relenting
Hast thou not giv'n me up a prey? betray'd me?

Sel. Oh, not for worlds! not ev'n for all the joys,
Love, or the prophet's Paradise can give!

' Amidst

‘ Amidst the fears and sorrows of my soul,
Amidst the thousand pains of anxious tenderness,
I made the gentle, kind Axalla swear,
Your life, your crown, and honour should be safe.

Baj. Away ! my soul disdains the vile dependence !
No, let me rather die, die like a king !
Shall I fall down at the proud Tartar’s foot,
And say, Have mercy on me ? Hark ! they come ! [*Shout.*
Disgrace will overtake my ling’ring hand ;
Die then ! Thy father’s shame, and thine, die with thee.
[*Offers to kill her.*

Sel. For Heav’n, for pity’s sake !

Baj. No more, thou trifler !

[*She catches hold of his arm.*

Ha ! dar’st thou bar my will ? Tear off her hold !

Sel. What, not for life ! Should I not plead for life ?
‘ When nature teaches ev’n the brute creation
‘ To hold fast that, her best, her noblest gift.’
Look on my eyes, which you so oft have kiss’d,
And swore they were your best-lov’d queen’s, my mother’s ;
Behold ’em now, streaming for mercy, mercy !
Look on me, and deny me, if you can !
‘ ’Tis but for life I beg. Is that a boon
‘ So hard for me t’ obtain, or you to grant ?’
Oh, spare me ! spare your Selima, my father !

Baj. A lazy sloth hangs on my resolution :
It is my Selima !—Ha ! What, my child !
And can I murder her ?—Dreadful imagination !
Again they come ! I leave her to my foes ! [*Shouts.*
And shall they triumph o’er the race of Bajazet !
Die, Selima ! Is that a father’s voice ?
Rouse, rouse, my fury ! Yes, she dies the victim
To my lost hopes. Out, out, thou foolish nature !
Justly she shares the ruin she has made.
Seize her, ye slaves ! and strangle her this moment !

[*To the mutes.*

Sel. Oh, let me die by you ! Behold my breast !
I wo’not shrink ! Oh, save me but from these !

Baj. Dispatch ! [*The mutes seize her.*

Sel. But for a moment, while I pray
That Heav’n may guard my royal father.

Baj.

Baj. Dogs !

Sel. That you may only bless me, ere I die. [*Shouts.*

Baj. Ye tedious villains, then the work is mine.

[*As Bajazet runs at Selima, with his sword, enter Tamerlane, Axalla, &c. Axalla gets between Bajazet and Selima, whilst Tamerlane and the rest drive Bajazet and the mutes off the stage.*]

Ax. And am I come to save thee ? Oh, my joy !

‘ Be this the whitest hour of all my life ;’

This one success is more than all my wars,

The noblest, dearest glory of my sword.

Sel. Alas, Axalla ! Death has been around me ;

My coward soul still trembles at the fright,

And seems but half secure, ev’n in thy arms.

Ax. Retire, my fair, and let me guard thee forth :

Blood and tumultuous slaughter are about us,

‘ And danger, in her ugliest form, is here ;’

Nor will the pleasure of my heart be full,

’Till all my fears are ended in thy safety.

[*Exeunt Axalla and Selima.*

Enter Tamerlane, the prince of Tanais, Zama, Mirvan, and soldiers ; with Bajazet, Omar, and the Dervise, prisoners.

Tam. Mercy at length gives up her peaceful sceptre,

And justice sternly takes her turn to govern ;

’Tis a rank world, and asks her keenest sword,

To cut up villainy of monstrous growth.

Zama, take care, that with the earliest dawn,

Those traitors meet the fate their treason merits !

[*Pointing to Omar and the Dervise.*

For thee, thou tyrant ! [*To Baj.*] whose oppressive violence
Has ruin’d those thou should’st protect at home ;

‘ Whose wars whose slaughters whose assassinations,

‘ (That basest thirst of blood ! that sin of cowards !)

‘ Whose faith so often giv’n and always violated,

‘ Have been th’ offence of Heav’n, and plague of earth,’

What punishment is equal to thy crimes ?

The doom thy rage design’d for me, be thine :

Clos’d in a cage, like some destructive beast,

I’ll have thee borne about, in public view,

A great example of that righteous vengeance

That waits on cruelty and pride like thine,

Baj.

Baj. It is beneath me to decline my fate,
 I stand prepar'd to meet thy utmost hate :
 Yet think not, I will long thy triumph see :
 None want the means, when the soul dares be free.
 I'll curse thee with my last, my parting breath,
 And keep the courage of my life in death ;
 Then boldly venture on that world unknown :
 It cannot use me worse than this has done.

[*Exit Bajazet guarded.*

Tam. Behold the vain effects of earth-born pride,
 That scorn'd Heaven's laws, and all its pow'r defy'd,
 That could the hand which form'd it first forget,
 And fondly say, I made myself be great !
 But justly those above assert their sway,
 And teach ev'n kings what homage they should pay,
 Who then rule best, when mindful to obey. }

[*Exeunt omnes.*

END of the FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

TOO well we saw what must have been our fate,
 When harmony with beauty join'd, of late,
 Threaten'd the ruins of our sinking state ;
 Till you, from whom our being we receive,
 In pity bid your own creation live :
 With moving sounds you kindly drew the fair,
 And fix'd, once more, that shining circle here :
 The lyre you bring is half Apollo's praise ;
 Be ours the task to win and wear his bays.
 Thin houses were before so frequent to us,
 We wanted not a project to undo us ;
 We seldom saw your honours, but by chance,
 As some folks meet their friends of Spain and France :
 'Twas verse decay'd, or politics improv'd,
 That had estrang'd you thus from what you lov'd.
 Time was, when busy faces were a jest,
 When wit and pleasure were in most request ;

When

*When chearful theatres with crowds were grac'd ;
 But those good days of poetry are past ;
 Now four reformers in an empty pit,
 With table-books, as at a lecture, sit,
 To take notes, and give evidence 'gainst wit.
 Those who were once our friends, employ'd elsewhere,
 Are busy now in settling peace and war :
 With careful brows, at Tom's and Will's they meet,
 And ask who did elections lose or get —
 Our friend has lost it — Faith I'm sorry for't,
 He's a good man, and ne'er was for the court ;
 He to no government will sue for grace,
 By want of merit safe against a place,
 By spite a patriot made, and sworn t' oppose
 All who are uppermost, as England's foes :
 Let whig or tory, any side prevail,
 Still 'tis his constant privilege to rail.
 Another, that the tax and war may cease,
 Talks of the duke of Anjou's right, and peace :
 And, from Spain's wise example, is for taking
 A viceroy of the mighty monarch's making ;
 Who should all rights and liberties maintain,
 And English laws by learn'd dragoons explain.*

*Come, leave these politics, and follow wit ;
 Here, uncontroll'd you may in judgment sit ;
 We'll never differ with a crowded pit :
 We'll take you all, ev'n on your own conditions,
 Think you great men, and wond'rous politicians ;
 And if you slight the offers which we make you,
 No Brentford princes will for statesmen take you.*





Roberts del.

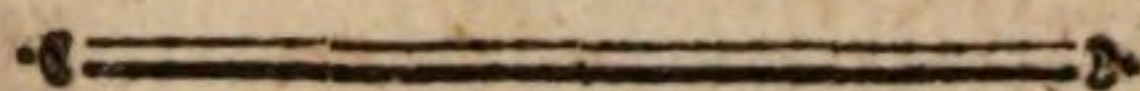
Published for Bells British Theatre July 15. 1776.

Thornthwaite Sc.

MISS YOUNGE in the Character of ZARA.

—— But when I feel
These Bonds, I look with loathing on myself.

BELL'S EDITION.



THE
MOURNING BRIDE;

A TRAGEDY, by Mr. CONGREVE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

— *Neque enim lex æquior ulla,
Quàm necis artifices arte petire suâ.*

OVID, de Arte Am.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCCLXXVI.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS



To her Royal Highness the

P R I N C E S S.

MADAM,

THAT high station, which, by your birth, you hold above the people, exacts from every one, as a duty, whatever honours they are capable of paying to your Royal Highness: but that more exalted place, to which your virtues have raised you, above the rest of princes, makes the tribute of our admiration and praise, rather a choice, more immediately preventing that duty. The public gratitude is ever founded on a public benefit; and what is universally blessed, is always an universal blessing. Thus, from yourself we derive the offerings which we bring; and that incense which arises to your name, only returns to its original, and but naturally requires the parent of its being.

From hence it is, that this poem, constituted on a moral whose end it is to recommend and to encourage virtue, of consequence, has recourse to your Royal Highness's patronage; aspiring to cast itself beneath your feet, and declining approbation, 'till you shall condescend to own it, and vouchsafe to shine upon it, as on a creature of your influence.

It is from the example of princes, that virtue becomes a fashion in the people; for even they who are averse to instruction, will yet be fond of imitation.

But there are multitudes who never can have means nor opportunities of so near an access, as to partake of the benefit of such examples. And, to these, tragedy, which distinguishes itself from the vulgar poetry by the dignity of its characters, may be of use and information. For they who are at that distance from original greatness, as to be deprived of the happiness of contemplating the perfections, and real excellencies of your Royal Highness's person in your court, may yet behold some small sketch-

es and imagings of the virtues of your mind, abstracted, and represented on the theatre.

Thus poets are instructed, and instruct; not alone by precepts which persuade, but also by examples which illustrate. Thus is delight interwoven with instruction; when not only virtue is prescribed, but also represented.

But if we are delighted with the liveliness of a feigned representation of great and good persons and their actions, how must we be charmed with beholding the persons themselves? If one or two excelling qualities, barely touched in the single action and small compass of a play, can warm an audience with a concern and regard even for the seeming success and prosperity of the actor, with what zeal must the hearts of all be filled for the continued and encreasing happiness of those who are the true and living instances of elevated and persisting virtue? Even the vicious themselves must have a secret veneration for those peculiar graces and endowments which are daily so eminently conspicuous in your Royal Highness; and, though repining, feel a pleasure, which, in spite of envy, they per-force approve.

If, in this piece, humbly offered to your Royal Highness, there shall appear the resemblance of any of those many excellencies which you so promiscuously possess, to be drawn so as to merit your least approbation, it has the end and accomplishment of its design. And however imperfect it may be in the whole, through the inexperience or incapacity of the author; yet if there is so much as to convince your Royal Highness, that a play may be, with industry, so disposed (in spite of the licentious practice of the modern theatre) as to become sometimes an innocent, and not unprofitable entertainment; it will abundantly gratify the ambition, and recompense the endeavours of

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient, and

Most humbly devoted servant,

WILLIAM CONGREVE.

P R O-

P R O L O G U E.

TH E time has been, when plays were not so plenty,
 And a less number, new, would well content ye.
 New plays did then like almanacks appear,
 And one was thought sufficient for a year :
 Though they are more like almanacks of late ;
 For in one year, I think, they're out of date.
 Nor were they, without reason, join'd together ;
 For just as one prognosticates the weather,
 How plentiful the crop, or scarce the grain,
 What peals of thunder, or what showers of rain ;
 So t'other can foretel, by certain rules,
 What crops of coxcombs, or what floods of fools.
 In such like prophecies were poets skill'd,
 Which now they find in their own tribe fulfill'd.
 The dearth of wit they did so long presage,
 Is fallen on us, and almost starves the stage.
 Were you not griev'd, as often as you saw
 Poor actors thresh such empty sheafs of straw ?
 Toiling and lab'ring at their lungs' expence,
 To start a jest, or force a little sense ?
 Hard fate for us, still harder in th' event ;
 Our authors sin, but we alone repent.
 Still they proceed, and, at our charge, write worse ;
 'Twere some amends, if they could reimburse ;
 But there's the devil, tho' their cause is lost,
 There's no recovering damages or cost.
 Good wits, forgive this liberty we take,
 Since custom gives the losers leave to speak.
 But if, provok'd, your dreadful wrath remains,
 Take your revenge upon the coming scenes :
 For that damn'd poet's spar'd, who damns a brother,
 As one thief 'scapes that executes another.
 Thus far alone does to the wits relate ;
 But from the rest we hope a better fate.
 To please, and move, has been our poet's theme,
 Art may direct, but nature is his aim ;

*And nature miss'd, in vain he boasts his art,
 For only nature can affect the heart.
 Then freely judge the scenes that shall ensue ;
 But as with freedom, judge with candour too.
 He would not lose, thro' prejudice, his cause ;
 Nor wou'd obtain, precariously, applause.
 Impartial censure he requests from all,
 Prepar'd, by just decrees, to stand or fall.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Manuel</i> , the king of Granada,	Mr. Aickin.
<i>Gonsalez</i> , his favourite,	Mr. Packer.
<i>Garcia</i> , son to <i>Gonsalez</i> ,	Mr. Davies.
<i>Perez</i> , captain of the guards,	Mr. Norris.
<i>Alonzo</i> , an officer, creature to <i>Gonsalez</i> ,	Mr. Wrighten.
<i>Osmyn</i> , a noble prisoner,	Mr. Smith.
<i>Heli</i> , a prisoner, his friend,	Mr. Hurst.
<i>Selim</i> , an eunuch,	Mr. Fawcett.

W O M E N.

<i>Almeria</i> , the princess of Granada,	Mrs. Yates.
<i>Zara</i> , a captive queen,	Miss Younge.
<i>Leonora</i> , chief attendant on the princess,	Mrs. Johnston.

Women, eunuchs, and mutes attending *Zara*, guards, &c.

SCENE, GRANADA.

T H E M O U R N I N G B R I D E.

A C T I.

SCENE, *a room of state.*

The curtain rising slowly to soft music, discovers Almeria in mourning, Leonora waiting in mourning.

After the music, Almeria rises from her chair, and comes forward.

ALMERIA.

MUSIC has charms to sooth a savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.
I've read, that things inanimate have mov'd,
And as with living souls, have been inform'd,
By magic numbers and persuasive sound.
What then am I? Am I more senseless grown
Than trees or flint? Oh, force of constant woe!
'Tis not in harmony to calm my griefs.
Anselmo sleeps, and is at peace; last night
The silent tomb receiv'd the good old king;
He and his sorrows now are safely lodg'd
Within its cold, but hospitable bosom.
Why am not I at peace?

Leon. Dear Madam, cease,
Or moderate your grief; there is no cause——

Alm. No cause! Peace, peace; there is eternal cause,
And misery eternal will succeed.
Thou canst not tell——thou hast indeed no cause.

Leon. Believe me, Madam, I lament Anselmo,
And always did compassionate his fortune;
Have often wept, to see how cruelly
Your father kept in chains his fellow-king:

8 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

And oft, at night, when all have been retir'd,
Have stol'n from bed, and to his prison crept;
Where, while his gaoler slept, I thro' the grate
Have softly whisper'd, and enquir'd his health;
Sent in my sighs and pray'rs for his deliv'rance;
For sighs and pray'rs were all that I could offer.

Alm. Indeed thou hast a soft and gentle nature.
That thus could melt to see a stranger's wrongs.
Oh, Leonora, hadst thou known Anselmo,
How wou'd thy heart have bled to see his sufferings!
Thou hadst no cause, but general compassion.

Leon. Love of my royal mistress gave me cause;
My love of you begot my grief for him;
For I had heard, that when the chance of war
Had bless'd Anselmo's arms with victory,
And the rich spoil of all the field, and you,
The glory of the whole, were made the prey
Of his success; 'that then, in spite of hate,
'Revenge, and that hereditary feud
'Between Valentia's and Granada's kings,'
He did endear himself to your affection,
By all the worthy and indulgent ways
His most industrious goodness cou'd invent;
Proposing, by a match between Alphonso
His son, the brave Valentian prince, and you,
To end the long dissention, and unite
The jarring crowns.

'*Alm.* Alphonso! O, Alphonso!
'Thou too art quiet—long hast been at peace—
'Both, both——father and son are now no more.
'Then why am I? Oh, when shall I have rest?
'Why do I live to say you are no more?
'Why are all these things thus?—Is it of force?
'Is there necessity I must be miserable?
'Is it of moment to the peace of Heav'n
'That I shou'd be afflicted thus?——If not,
'Why is it thus contriv'd? Why are things laid
'By some unseen hand, so, as of sure consequence,
'They must to me bring curses, grief of heart,
'The last distress of life, and sure despair?

'*Leon.* Alas! you search too far, and think too deeply.'

Alm. Why was I carry'd to Anselmo's court?

Or

THE MOURNING BRIDE. 9

Or there, why was I us'd so tenderly ?
 Why not ill treated, like an enemy ?
 For so my father wou'd have us'd his child.
 Oh, Alphonso, Alphonso !
 Devouring seas have wash'd thee from my sight.
 No time shall raze thee from my memory ;
 No, I will live to be thy monument :
 The cruel ocean is no more thy tomb :
 But in my heart thou art interr'd ; there, there,
 Thy dear resemblance is for ever fix'd ;
 My love, my lord, my husband still, tho' lost.

Leon. Husband ! Oh, Heav'ns !

Alm. Alas ! what have I said ?

My grief has hurry'd me beyond all thought.
 I wou'd have kept that secret ; though I know
 Thy love, and faith to me deserve all confidence.

' But 'tis the wretch's comfort still to have
 ' Some small reserve of near and inward woe,
 ' Some unsuspected hoard of darling grief,
 ' Which they unseen may wail, and weep, and mourn,
 ' And, glutton-like, alone devour.

' *Leon.* Indeed,

' I knew not this.

' *Alm.* Oh, no, thou know'st not half,

' Know'st nothing of my sorrows—if thou didst—

' If I shou'd tell thee, would'st thou pity me ?

' Tell me ; I know thou would'st ; thou art compassionate.'

Leon. Witness these tears——

' *Alm.* I thank thee, Leonora——

' Indeed I do, for pitying thy sad mistress :

' For 'tis, alas ! the poor prerogative

' Of greatness to be wretched, and unpitied——

' But I did promise I wou'd tell thee—What ?

' My miseries ? Thou dost already know 'em.

' And when I told thee thou didst nothing know,

' It was because thou didst not know Alphonso :

' For to have known my loss, thou must have known

' His worth, his truth, and tenderness of love.'

Leon. The memory of that brave prince stands fair
 In all report—

And I have heard imperfectly his loss ;

But

10 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

But fearful to renew your troubles past,
I never did presume to ask the story.

Alm. If for my swelling heart I can, I'll tell thee.
I was a welcome captive in Valentia,
E'en on the day when Manuel, my father,
Led on his conqu'ring troops high as the gates
Of king Anselmo's palace; which in rage,
And heat of war, and dire revenge, he fir'd.
The good king flying to avoid the flames,
Started amidst his foes, and made captivity
His fatal refuge—Wou'd that I had fall'n
Amidst those flames—but 'twas not so decreed.
Alphonso, who foresaw my father's cruelty,
Had borne the queen and me on board a ship
Ready to sail; and when this news was brought
We put to sea; but being betray'd by some
Who knew our flight, we closely were pursu'd,
And almost taken; when a sudden storm
Drove us, and those that follow'd, on the coast
Of Afric: There our vessel struck the shore
And bulging 'gainst a rock, was dash'd in pieces;
But Heav'n spar'd me for yet much more affliction!
Conducting them who follow'd us, to shun
The shore, and save me floating on the waves,
While the good queen and my Alphonso perish'd.

Leon. Alas! were you then wedded to Alphonso?

Alm. That day, that fatal day, our hands were join'd.
For when my lord beheld the ship pursuing,
And saw her rate so far exceeding ours,
He came to me, and begg'd me by my love,
I wou'd consent the priest shou'd make us one;
That whether death or victory ensu'd
I might be his, beyond the power of fate:
The queen too did assist his suit—I granted;
And in one day was wedded and a widow,

Leon. Indeed 'twas mournful——

Alm. 'Twas—as I have told thee——
For which I mourn, and will for ever mourn;
Nor will I change these black and dismal robes,
Or ever dry these swoln and watery eyes;

Or ever taste content, or peace of heart,
While I have life, and thought of my Alphonso.

‘ *Leon.* Look down, good Heav’n, with pity on her
forrows,

‘ And grant that time may bring her some relief.

‘ *Alm.* Oh, no ! time gives increase to my afflictions.

‘ The circling hours, that gather all the woes

‘ Which are diffus’d thro’ the revolving year,

‘ Come heavy laden with th’ oppressing weight

‘ To me ; with me, successively, they leave

‘ The sighs, the tears, the groans, the restless cares,

‘ And all the damps of grief, that did retard their flight :

‘ They shake their downy wings, and scatter all

‘ The dire collected dews on my poor head :

‘ Then fly with joy and swiftness from me.’

[*Shouts at a distance.*

Leon. Hark !

The distant shouts proclaim your father’s triumph.

O cease, for Heav’n’s sake, assuage a little

This torrent of your grief, for, much I fear,

’Twill urge his wrath, to see you drown’d in tears,

When joy appears in ev’ry other face.

Alm. And joy he brings to ev’ry other heart,

But double, double weight of woe to mine :

For with him Garcia comes—Garcia, to whom

I must be sacrific’d, and all the vows

I gave my dear Alphonso basely broken.

No, it shall never be ; for I will die

First, die ten thousand deaths—Look down, look down,

Alphonso, hear the sacred vow I make ; [*Kneels.*

‘ One moment, cease to gaze on perfect blifs,

‘ And bend thy glorious eyes to earth and me ;’

And thou, Anselmo, if yet thou art arriv’d

Thro’ all impediments of purging fire,

To that bright Heav’n, where my Alphonso reigns,

Behold thou also, and attend my vow.

If ever I do yield, or give consent,

By any action, word, or thought, to wed

Another lord ; may then just Heav’n show’r down

Unheard of curses on me, greater far

(If such there be in angry Heaven’s vengeance)

Than

Than any I have yet endur'd—And now [Rising.
 My heart has some relief ; having so well
 Discharg'd this debt, incumbent on my love.

Yet, one thing more I wou'd engage from thee.

Leon. My heart, my life, and will, are only yours.

Alm. I thank thee. 'Tis but this : anon, when all
 Are wrapp'd and busied in the general joy,
 Thou wilt withdraw, and privately with me
 Steal forth, to visit good Anselmo's tomb.

Leon. Alas ! I fear some fatal resolution.

Alm. No, on my life, my faith, I mean no ill,
 Nor violence—I feel myself more light,
 And more at large, since I have made this vow.
 Perhaps I would repeat it there more solemnly.
 'Tis that, or some such melancholy thought,
 Upon my word, no more.

Leon. I will attend you.

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. The lord Gonfalez comes to tell your highness
 The king is just arriv'd.

Alm. Conduct him in.

[Exit Alon.

That's his pretence ; his errand is, I know,
 To fill my ears with Garcia's valiant deeds ;
 And gild and magnify his son's exploits.
 But I am arm'd with ice around my heart,
 Not to be warm'd with words, or idle eloquence.

Enter Gonfalez.

Gon. Be ev'ry day of your long life like this.
 The sun, bright conquest, and your brighter eyes,
 Have all conspir'd to blaze promiscuous light,
 And bless this day with most unequal lustre.
 Your royal father, my victorious lord,
 Loaden with spoils, and ever-living laurel,
 Is ent'ring now, in martial pomp, the palace.
 Five hundred mules precede his solemn march,
 Which groan beneath the weight of Moorish wealth.
 Chariots of war, adorn'd with glitt'ring gems,
 Succeed ; and next, a hundred neighing steeds,
 White as the fleecy rain on Alpine hills,
 That bound and foam, and champ the golden bit,
 As they disdain'd the victory they grace.
 Prisoners of war in shining fetters follow :

And

And captains of the noblest blood of Afric
 Sweat by his chariot wheels, 'and lick and grind,
 ' With gnashing teeth, the dust his triumphs raise.'
 The swarming populace spread every wall,
 ' And cling, as if with claws they did enforce
 ' Their hold; thro' clefted stones stretching and staring,
 ' As if they were all eyes, and every limb
 ' Would feed its faculty of admiration :'
 While you alone retire, and shun this fight;
 This fight, which is indeed not seen (tho' twice
 The multitude should gaze) in absence of your eyes.

Alm. My lord, mine eyes ungratefully behold
 The gilded trophies of exterior honours.
 Nor will my ears be charm'd with founding words,
 Or pompous phrase, the pageantry of souls.
 But that my father is return'd in safety,
 I bend to Heav'n with thanks.

Gon. Excellent prince! !
 But 'tis a task unfit for my weak age
 With dying words to offer at your praise.
 Garcia, my son, your beauty's lowest slave,
 Has better done; in proving with his sword
 The force and influence of your matchless charms.

Alm. I doubt not of the worth of Garcia's deeds,
 Which had been brave, though I had ne'er been born.

Leon. Madam, the king. [Flourish.

' *Alm.* My women. I wou'd meet him.'

[Attendants to Almeria enter in mourning.
*Symphony of warlike music. Enter the King, attended by
 Garcia and several officers. Files of prisoners in chains,
 and guards, who are ranged in order round the stage.
 Almeria meets the King, and kneels: afterwards Gonfa-
 lez kneels and kisses the King's hand, while Garcia does
 the same to the princess.*

King. Almeria, rise—My best Gonfalez, rise.
 What, tears! my good old friend—

Gon. But tears of joy.
 Believe me, Sir, to see you thus, has fill'd
 Mine eyes with more delight than they can hold.

King. By Heav'n, thou lov'st me, and I'm pleas'd thou
 dost;
 Take it for thanks, old man, that I rejoice

To see thee weep on this occasion—Some
 Here are, who seem to mourn at our success!
 Why is't, Almeria, that you meet our eyes,
 Upon this solemn day, in these sad weeds?
 In opposition to my brightness, you
 And yours are all like daughters of affliction.

Alm. Forgive me, Sir, if I in this offend.
 The year, which I have vow'd to pay to Heav'n,
 In mourning and strict life, for my deliv'rance
 From wreck and death, wants yet to be expir'd.

King. Your zeal to Heav'n is great, so is your debt:
 Yet something too is due to me, who gave
 That life, which Heav'n preserv'd. A day bestow'd
 In filial duty, had atton'd and given
 A dispensation to your vow—No more.

'Twas weak and wilful—and a woman's error.
 Yet, upon thought, it doubly wounds my sight,
 To see that sable worn upon the day,
 Succeeding that, in which our deadliest foe,
 Hated Anselmo, was interr'd—By Heav'n,
 It looks as thou didst mourn for him: just so
 Thy senseless vow appear'd to bear its date,
 Not from that hour wherein thou wert preserv'd,
 But that wherein the curs'd Alphonso perish'd.
 Ha! What? thou dost not weep to think of that!

Gon. Have patience, royal Sir; the princess weeps
 To have offended you. If fate decreed,
 One pointed hour should be Alphonso's loss,
 And her deliverance, is she to blame?

King. I tell thee she's to blame, not to have feasted
 When my first foe was laid in earth, such enmity,
 Such detestation bears my blood to his;
 My daughter should have revell'd at his death,
 She should have made these palace walls to shake,
 And all this high and ample roof to ring
 With her rejoicings. What, to mourn and weep!
 Then, then to weep, and pray, and grieve! by Heav'n,
 There's not a slave, a shackled slave of mine,
 But should have smil'd that hour, through all his care,
 And shook his chains in transport and rude harmony.

Gon. What she has done, was in excess of goodness;
Betray'd

Betray'd by too much piety, to seem
As if she had offended.— Sure, no more.

King. To seem is to commit, at this conjuncture.
I wo't not have a seeming sorrow seen
To-day.— Retire ; divest yourself with speed
Of that offensive black ; on me be all
The violation of your vow ; for you
It shall be your excuse, that I command it.

Gar. [*Kneeling.*] Your pardon, Sir, if I presume so far,
As to remind you of your gracious promise.

King. Rise, Garcia—I forgot. Yet stay, Almeria.

Alm. My boding heart !—What is your pleasure, Sir ?

King. Draw near, and give your hand, and, Garcia,
yours :

Receive this lord, as one whom I have found
Worthy to be your husband, and my son.

Gar. Thus let me kneel to take—O not to take---
But to devote, and yield myself for ever
The slave and creature of my royal mistress.

Gon. O let me prostrate pay my worthless thanks---

King. No more ; my promise long since pass'd, thy
services

And Garcia's well-try'd valour, all oblige me.
This day we triumph ; but to-morrow's sun,
Garcia, shall shine to grace thy nuptials——

Alm. Oh !

[*Faints.*]

Gar. She faints ! help to support her.

Gonf. She recovers.

King. ' A fit of bridal fear.' How is't, Almeria ?

Alm. A sudden chillness seizes on my spirits.

Your leave, Sir, to retire.

King. Garcia, conduct her.

[*Garcia leads Almeria to the door, and returns.*]

This idle vow hangs on her woman's fears,
' I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,
' And make it sin, not to renounce that vow
' Which I'd have broken.' Now, what would Alonzo ?

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. Your beauteous captive, Zara, is arriv'd,
And with a train as if she still were wife
To Albucacim, and the Moor had conquer'd.

King. It is our will she should be so attended.

16 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

'Bear hence these prisoners.' Garcia, which is he,
Of whose mute valour you relate such wonders?

[Prisoners led off.]

Gar. Osmyn, who led the Moorish horse; but he,
Great Sir, at her request, attends on Zara.

King. He is your prisoner; as you please dispose him.

Gar. I would oblige him, but he shuns my kindness;
And with a haughty mien, and stern civility,
Dumbly declines all offers. If he speak,
'Tis scarce above a word; as he were born

Alone to do, and did disdain to talk;
At least to talk where he must not command.

King. Such fullness, and in a man so brave,
Must have some other cause than his captivity.
Did Zara, then, request he might attend her?

Gar. My lord, she did.

King. That, join'd with his behaviour,
Begets a doubt. I'd have 'em watch'd; perhaps
Her chains hang heavier on him than his own.

*Enter Alonzo, Zara and Osmyn bound, conducted by Perez
and a guard, and attended by Selim and several mutes
and eunuchs in a train.*

King. What welcome, and what honours, beauteous
Zara,

A king and conqueror can give, are yours.
A conqueror indeed, where you are won;
Who with such lustre strike admiring eyes,
That had our pomp been with your presence grac'd,
Th' expecting crowd had been deceiv'd; and seen
The monarch enter not triumphant, but
In pleasing triumph led; your beauty's slave.

Zar. If I on any terms could condescend
To like captivity, or think those honours,
Which conquerors in courtesy bestow,
Of equal value with unborrow'd rule
And native right to arbitrary sway,
I might be pleas'd, when I behold this train
With usual homage wait: but when I feel
These bonds, I look with loathing on myself,
And scorn vile slavery, though doubly hid
Beneath mock-praises, and dissembled state.

King. Those bonds! 'Twas my command you should
How durst you, Perez, disobey?

[be free.]

Perez.

Perez. Great Sir,
Your order was she should not wait your triumph ;
But at some distance follow, thus attended.

King. 'Tis false ; 'twas more ; I bid she should be free ;
If not in words, I bid it by my eyes.
Her eyes did more than bid——Free her and hers
With speed——yet stay——my hands alone can make
Fit restitution here——Thus I release you,
And by releasing you, enslave myself.

Zar. Such favours, so conferr'd, tho' when unfought ;
Deserve acknowledgment from noble minds.
Such thanks, as one hating to be oblig'd——
Yet hating more ingratitude, can pay,
I offer.

King. Born to excel, and to command !
As by transcendent beauty to attract
All eyes, so by preheminance of soul
To rule all hearts.

Garcia, what's he, who with contracted brow,
[Beholding Osmyn as they unbind him.
And fullen port, glooms downwards with his eyes ;
At once regardless of his chains, or liberty ?

Gar. That, Sir, is he of whom I spoke ; that's Osmyn.

King. He answers well the character you gave him.
Whence comes it, valiant Osmyn, that a man
So great in arms, as thou art said to be,
So hardly can endure captivity,
The common chance of war ?

Osm. Because captivity
Has robb'd me of a dear and just revenge.

King. I understand not that.

Osm. I would not have you,

Zar. That gallant Moor in battle lost a friend,
Whom more than life he lov'd ; and the regret,
Of not revenging on his foes that loss,
Has caus'd this melancholy and despair.

King. She does excuse him ; 'tis as I suspected.

[To Gonf.

Gon. That friend may be herself ; seem not to heed
His arrogant reply : she looks concern'd.

King. I'll have enquiry made ; perhaps his friend
Yet lives, and is a prisoner. His name ?

Zar. Heli.

18 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

King. Garcia, that search shall be your care :
 It shall be mine to pay devotion here ;
 At this fair shrine to lay my laurels down,
 And raise love's altar on the spoils of war.
 Conquest and triumph, now, are mine no more ;
 Nor will I victory in camps adore :
 ' For, ling'ring there, in long suspense she stands,
 ' Shifting the prize in unresolving hands ;
 ' Unus'd to wait, I broke through her delay,
 ' Fix'd her by force, and snatch'd the doubtful day.
 ' Now late I find that war is but her sport ;
 ' In love the goddess keeps her awful court ;'
 Fickle in fields, unsteadily she flies,
 But rules with settled sway in Zara's eyes. [Exit.]

The END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *representing the isle of a temple.*

' Garcia, Heli, Perez.

' GARCIA.

' **T**HIS way, we're told, Osmyn was seen to walk ;
 ' Choosing this lonely mansion of the dead,
 ' To mourn, brave Heli, thy mistaken fate.
 ' *Heli.* Let heav'n with thunder to the centre strike me,
 ' If to arise in very deed from death,
 ' And to revisit with my long-clos'd eyes
 ' This living light, cou'd to my soul or sense
 ' Afford a thought, or shew a glimpse of joy,
 ' In least proportion to the vast delight
 ' I feel, to hear of Osmyn's name ; to hear
 ' That Osmyn lives, and I again shall see him.
 ' *Gar.* I've heard, with admiration, of your friend-
 ship.
 ' *Per.* Yonder, my lord, behold the noble Moor.
 ' *Hel.* Where ? Where ?
 ' *Gar.* I saw him not, nor any like him——
 ' *Per.* I saw him when I spoke, thwarting my view,
 ' And striding with distemper'd haste ; his eyes
 ' Seem'd flame, and flash'd upon me with a glance ;
 ' Then

- ‘ Then forward shot their fires which he pursu’d,
 ‘ As to some object frightful, yet not fear’d.
 ‘ *Gar.* Let’s haste to follow him, and know the cause.
 ‘ *Hel.* My lord, let me intreat you to forbear:
 ‘ Leave me alone, to find and cure the cause.
 ‘ I know his melancholy, and such starts
 ‘ Are usual to his temper. It might raise him
 ‘ To act some violence upon himself,
 ‘ So to be caught in an unguarded hour,
 ‘ And when his soul gives all her passions way,
 ‘ Secure and loose in friendly solitude.
 ‘ I know his noble heart would burst with shame,
 ‘ To be surpriz’d by strangers in its frailty.
 ‘ *Gar.* Go, generous Heli, and relieve your friend.
 ‘ Far be it from me, officiously to pry
 ‘ Or press upon the privacies of others.

[*Exit Heli.*]

- ‘ Perez, the king expects from our return
 ‘ To have his jealousy confirm’d, or clear’d,
 ‘ Of that appearing love which Zara bears
 ‘ To Osmyn; but some other opportunity
 ‘ Must make that plain.

- ‘ *Per.* To me ’twas long since plain,
 ‘ And ev’ry look from him and her confirms it.
 ‘ *Gar.* If so, unhappiness attends their love,
 ‘ And I could pity ’em. I hear some coming.
 ‘ The friends, perhaps, are met; let us avoid ’em.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Almeria and Leonora.

Alm. It was a fancy’d noise, for all is hush’d.

Leon. It bore the accent of a human voice.

Alm. It was thy fear, or else some transient wind
 Whistling through hollows of this vaulted isle.
 We’ll listen——

Leon. Hark!

Alm. No, all is hush’d, and still as death—’tis dread-
 How reverend is the face of this tall pile, [ful!
 Whose antient pillars rear their marble heads,
 To bear aloft its arch’d and pond’rous roof,
 By its own weight made stedfast and immoveable,
 Looking tranquility. It strikes an awe
 And terror on my aking sight; the tombs

And

20 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

And monumental caves of death look cold,
And shoot a chillness to my trembling heart.
Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice;
Nay, quickly speak to me, and let me hear
Thy voice—my own affrights me with its echoes.

Leon. Let us return; the horror of this place
And silence will increase your melancholy.

Alm. It may my fears, but cannot add to that.
No, I will on; shew me Anselmo's tomb,
Lead me o'er bones and skulls, and mould'ring earth
Of human bodies; for I'll mix with them,
Or wind me in the shroud of some pale corse
Yet green in earth, rather than be the bride
Of Garcia's more detested bed: that thought
Exerts my spirit; and my present fears
Are lost in dread of greater ill. Then shew me,
Lead me, for I am bolder grown: lead on
Where I may kneel, and pay my vows again
To him, to Heav'n, and my Alphonso's soul.

Leon. I go; but Heav'n can tell with what regret.

[*Excunt.*]

Enter Heli.

I wander through this maze of monuments,
Yet cannot find him—Hark! sure 'tis the voice
Of one complaining—There it sounds—I'll follow it.

[*Exit.*]

The SCENE opening discovers a place of tombs: one monument fronting the view greater than the rest.

Enter Almeria and Leonora.

Leon. Behold the sacred vault, within whose womb
The poor remains of good Anselmo rest,
Yet fresh and unconsum'd by time or worms.
What do I see? Oh, heav'n! either my eyes
Are false, or still the marble door remains
Unclos'd; the iron grates, that lead to death
Beneath, are still wide stretch'd upon their hinge,
And staring on us with unfolded leaves.

Alm. Sure 'tis the friendly yawn of death for me;
And that dumb mouth, significant in show,
Invites me to the bed, where I alone
Shall rest; shews me the grave, where nature, weary

And

And long oppress'd with woes and bending cares,
 May lay the burden down, and sink in slumbers
 Of peace eternal. ' Death, grim death, will fold
 ' Me in his leaden arms, and press me close
 ' To his cold clayie breast : ' my father then
 Will cease his tyranny ; and Garcia too
 Will fly my pale deformity with loathing.
 My soul, enlarg'd from its vile bonds, will mount,
 And range the starry orbs, and milky ways,
 ' Of that refulgent world, where I shall swim
 ' In liquid light, and float on seas of bliss
 To my Alphonso's soul. Oh, joy too great !
 Oh, extasy of thought ! Help me, Anselmo ;
 Help me, Alphonso ; take me, reach thy hand ;
 To thee, to thee I call, to thee, Alphonso :
 Oh, Alphonso !

Osmyn ascending from the tomb.

Osm. Who calls that wretched thing that was Alphonso ?

Alm. Angels, and all the host of Heav'n, support me !

Osm. Whence is that voice, whose shrillness, from the grave,

And growing to his father's shroud, roots up Alphonso ?

Alm. Mercy ! Providence ! Oh, speak,
 Speak to it quickly, quickly ; speak to me,
 Comfort me, help me, hold me, hide me, hide me,
 Leonora, in thy bosom, from the light,
 And from my eyes.

Osm. Amazement and illusion !
 Rivet and nail me where I stand, ye pow'rs,
[Coming forward.]

That motionless I may be still deceiv'd.
 Let me not stir, nor breathe, lest I dissolve
 That tender, lovely form of painted air,
 So like Almeria. Ha ! it sinks, it falls ;
 I'll catch it ere it goes, and grasp her shade.
 'Tis life ! 'tis warm ! 'tis she, 'tis she herself !
 Nor dead, nor shade, but breathing and alive !
 It is Almeria, 'tis, it is my wife !

Enter Heli.

Leon. Alas ! she stirs not yet, nor lifts her eyes ;

He

He too is fainting——Help me, help me, stranger,
Whoe'er thou art, and lend thy hand to raise
These bodies.

Hcl. Ha! 'tis he! and with——Almeria!
Oh, miracle of happiness! Oh, joy
Unhop'd for! does Almeria live!

Ofm. Where is she?
Let me behold and touch her, and be sure
'Tis she; 'shew me her face, and let me feel
'Her lips with mine——'Tis she, I'm not deceiv'd;
'I taste her breath, I warm'd her and am warm'd.'
Look up, Almeria, bless me with thy eyes;
Look on thy love, thy lover, and thy husband.

Alm. I've sworn I'll not wed Garcia: why d'ye force
Is this a father? [me.

Ofm. Look on thy Alphonso.
Thy father is not here, my love, nor Garcia:
Nor am I what I seem, but thy Alphonso.
'Wilt thou not know me?' Hast thou then forgot me?
'Hast thou thy eyes, yet canst not see Alphonso?'
Am I so alter'd, or art thou so chang'd,
That seeing my disguise, thou seest not me?

Alm. It is, it is Alphonso; 'tis his face,
His voice, I know him now, I know him all.
'Oh, take me to thy arms, and bear me hence,
'Back to the bottom of the boundless deep,
'To seas beneath, where thou so long hast dwelt.
Oh! how hast thou returned? How hast thou charm'd
The wildness of the waves and rocks to this?
That thus relenting they have giv'n thee back
To earth, to light and life, to love and me.

Ofm. Oh, I'll not ask, nor answer how, or why
We both have backward trod the paths of fate,
To meet again in life; to know I have thee,
Is knowing more than any circumstance,
Or means, by which I have thee——
To fold thee thus, to press thy balmy lips,
And gaze upon thy eyes, is so much joy,
I have not leisure to reflect, or know,
Or trifle time in thinking.

Alm. Stay a while——
Let me look on thee yet a little more.

‘ *Osm.* What wouldst thou? thou dost put me from thee.

‘ *Alm.* Yes.

‘ *Osm.* And why? What dost thou mean? Why dost thou gaze so?

‘ *Alm.* I know not; ’tis to see thy face, I think—’

It is too much! too much to bear and live!

To see thee thus again is such profusion

Of joy, of bliss—I cannot bear—I must

Be mad—I cannot be transported thus.

Osm. Thou excellence, thou joy, thou heav’n of love!

Alm. Where hast thou been? and how art thou alive?

‘ How is all this? All-pow’rful Heav’n, what are we?

‘ Oh, my strain’d heart—let me again behold thee,

‘ For I weep to see thee—Art thou not paler?

‘ Much, much; how thou art chang’d!

‘ *Osm.* Not in my love.

‘ *Alm.* No, no, thy griefs, I know, have done this to thee.

‘ Thou hast wept much, Alphonso; and, I fear,

‘ Too much, too tenderly, lamented me.

‘ *Osm.* Wrong not my love, to say too tenderly.

‘ No more, my life; talk not of tears or grief;

‘ Affliction is no more, now thou art found.

‘ Why dost thou weep, and hold thee from my arms,

‘ My arms which ake to fold thee fast, and grow

‘ To thee with twining? Come, come to my heart.

‘ *Alm.* I will, for I should never look enough.

‘ They would have marry’d me; but I had sworn

‘ To Heav’n and thee, and sooner would have dy’d—

‘ *Osm.* Perfection of all faithfulness and love!

‘ *Alm.* Indeed I wou’d—Nay, I wou’d tell thee all,

‘ If I could speak; how I have mourn’d and pray’d:

‘ For I have pray’d to thee, as to a saint;

‘ And thou hast heard my pray’r; for thou art come

‘ To my distress, to my despair, which Heav’n

‘ Could only, by restoring thee, have cur’d.

‘ *Osm.* Grant me but life, good Heav’n, but length of days,

‘ To pay some part, some little of this debt,

‘ This countless sum of tenderness and love,

‘ For which I stand engag’d to this all excellence:

‘ Then

' Then bear me in a whirlwind to my fate,
 ' Snatch me from life, and cut me short unwarn'd :
 ' Then, then 'twill be enough—I shall be old,
 ' I shall have liv'd beyond all æras then
 ' Of yet unmeasur'd time ; when I have made
 ' This exquisite, this most amazing goodness,
 ' Some recompence of love and matchless truth.

' *Alm.* 'Tis more than recompence to see thy face :
 ' If Heav'n is greater joy it is no happiness,
 ' For 'tis not to be borne—What shall I say ?
 ' I have a thousand things to know and ask,
 ' And speak—That thou art here beyond all hope,
 ' All thought ; that all at once thou art before me,
 ' And with such suddenness hast hit my sight,
 ' Is such surprise, such mystery, such extasy,
 ' It hurries all my soul, and stuns my sense.

Sure from thy father's tomb thou didst arise ?

Osm. I did ; and thou, my love, didst call me ; thou.

Alm. True ; but how cam'st thou there ? Wert thou alone ?

Osm. I was, and lying on my father's lead,
 When broken echoes of a distant voice
 Disturb'd the sacred silence of the vault,
 In murmurs round my head. I rose and listen'd,
 And thought I heard thy spirit call Alphonso ;
 I thought I saw thee too ; but, Oh, I thought not
 That I indeed should be so blest to see thee——

Alm. But still, how cam'st thou thither ? How thus ?
 ——Ha !

What's he, who, like thyself, is started here
Ere seen ?

Osm. Where ? Ha ! what do I see, Antonio !
 I'm fortunate indeed——my friend too, safe !

Heli. Most happily, in finding you thus blest'd.

Alm. More miracles ! Antonio too, escap'd !

Osm. And twice escap'd ; both from the rage of seas
 And war : for in the fight I saw him fall.

Heli. But fell unhurt, a pris'ner as yourself,
 And as yourself made free ; hither I came,
 Impatiently to seek you, where I knew
 Your grief would lead you to lament Anselmo.

' *Osm.*

‘ *Oms.* There are no wonders, or else all is wonder.

‘ *Heli.* I saw you on the ground, and rais’d you up,

‘ When with astonishment I saw Almeria.

‘ *Osm.* I saw her too, and therefore saw not thee.

‘ *Alm.* Nor I ; nor could I, for my eyes were yours.

Osm. What means the bounty of all-gracious Heav’n,
That persevering still, with open hand,
It scatters good, as in a waste of mercy !

Where will this end ? But Heav’n is infinite

In all, and can continue to bestow,

When scanty number shall be spent in telling.

Leon. Or I’m deceiv’d, or I beheld the glimpse
Of two in shining habits cross the isle ;

Who by their pointing, seem to mark this place.

Alm. Sure I have dreamt, if we must part so soon.

Osm. I wish at least our parting were a dream,
Or we could sleep ’till we again were met.

Heli. Zara with Selim, Sir, I saw and know ’em :
You must be quick, for love will lend her wings.

Alm. What love ? Who is she ? Why are you alarm’d ?

Osm. She’s the reverse of thee ; she’s my unhappiness.
Harbour no thought that may disturb thy peace ;

‘ But gently take thyself away, lest she

‘ Should come, and see the straining of my eyes

‘ To follow thee.’

Retire, my love, I’ll think how we may meet

To part no more ; my friend will tell thee all ;

How I escap’d, how I am here, and thus ;

How I’m not call’d Alphonso now, but Osmyn ;

And he Heli. All, all he will unfold,

Ere next we meet——

Alm. Sure we shall meet again——

Osm. We shall ; we part not but to meet again.

Gladness and warmth of ever-kindling love

Dwell with thee, and revive thy heart in absence.

[*Exeunt Alm. Leon. and Heli.*

Yet I behold her—yet—and now no more.

Turn your lights inward, eyes, and view my thoughts,

So shall you still behold her—‘ ’twill not be.

‘ Oh, impotence of sight ! Mechanic sense !

‘ Which to exterior objects ow’st thy faculty,

‘ Not seeing of election, but necessity.

26 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

' Thus do our eyes, as do all common mirrors,
 ' Successively reflect succeeding images :
 ' Not what they would, but must ; a star, or toad ;
 ' Just as the hand of chance administers.
 ' Not so the mind, whose undetermin'd view
 ' Revolves, and to the present adds the past :
 ' Effaying farther to futurity ;
 ' But that in vain. I have Almeria here
 ' At once, as I before have seen her often—

Enter Zara and Selim.

Zar. See where he stands, folded and fix'd to earth,
 Stiff'ning in thought, a statue among statues.
 Why, cruel Osmyn, dost thou fly me thus ?
 ' Is it well done ? Is this then the return
 ' For fame, for honour, and for empire lost ?
 ' But what is loss of honour, fame, and empire ?
 ' Is this the recompence reserv'd for love ?
 ' Why, dost thou leave my eyes, and fly my arms,
 ' To find this place of horror and obscurity ?
 Am I more loathsome to thee than the grave,
 That thou dost seek to shield thee there, and shun
 My love ? But to the grave I'll follow thee—
 He looks not, minds not, hears not ; barb'rous man !
 Am I neglected thus ? Am I despis'd ?
 Not hear'd ! Ungrateful Osmyn !

Osm. Ha, 'tis Zara !

Zar. Yes, traitor ; Zara, lost, abandon'd Zara,
 Is a regardless suppliant, now, to Osmyn.
 The slave, the wretch that she redeem'd from death,
 Disdains to listen now, or look on Zara.

Osm. Far be the guilt of such reproaches from me ;
 Lost in myself, and blinded by my thoughts,
 I saw you not till now.

Zar. Now then you see me—
 But with such dumb and thankless eyes you look,
 Better I was unseen, than seen thus coldly.

Osm. What would you from a wretch who came to
 mourn,
 And only for his sorrows chose this solitude ?
 Look round ; joy is not here, nor chearfulness.
 You have pursu'd misfortune to its dwelling,
 Yet look for gaiety and gladness there.

Zar.

Zar. Inhuman ! Why, why dost thou rack me thus ?
And, with perverseness, from the purpose, answer ?
What is't to me, this house of misery ?
What joy do I require ? If thou dost mourn,
I come to mourn with thee, to share thy griefs,
And give thee, for 'em, in exchange, my love.

Os'm. Oh, that's the greatest grief—I am so poor,
I have not wherewithal to give again.

Zar. Thou hast a heart, tho' 'tis a savage one ;
Give it me as it is ; I ask no more
For all I've done, and all I have endur'd :
For saving thee, when I beheld thee first,
Driv'n by the tide upon my country's coast,
Pale and expiring, drench'd in briny waves,
Thou and thy friend, till my compassion found thee ;
Compassion ! scarce will't own that name, so soon,
So quickly, was it love ; for thou wert godlike
E'en then. Kneeling on earth, I loos'd my hair,
And with it dry'd thy wat'ry cheeks, then chaf'd
Thy temples, till reviving blood arose,
And, like the morn, vermilion'd o'er thy face.
Oh, Heav'n ! how did my heart rejoice and ake,
When I beheld the day-break of thy eyes,
And felt the balm of thy respiring lips !

Os'm. Oh, call not to my mind what you have done ;
It sets a debt of that account before me,
Which shews me poor and bankrupt even in hopes.

Zar. ' The faithful Selim, and my women, know
The danger which I tempted to conceal you.
You know how I abus'd the cred'lous king ;
What arts I us'd to make you pass on him,
When he receiv'd you as the prince of Fez ;
' And as my kinsman, honour'd and advanc'd you.'
Oh ! why do I relate what I have done ?
What did I not ? Was't not for you this war
Commenc'd ? Not knowing who you were, nor why
You hated Manuel, I urg'd my husband
To this invasion ; where he late was lost,
Where all is lost, and I am made a slave.

28 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

* *Osm. You pierce my soul—I own it all—But while
The power is wanting to repay such benefits,
'Tis treble anguish to a generous heart.*

*Zara. Repay me with thy heart—What, dost thou start?
Make no reply! Is this thy gratitude?*

Look on me now, from empire fall'n to slavery;
Think on my suff'rings first, then look on me;
Think on the cause of all, then view thyself:
Reflect on Osmyn, and then look on Zara,
The fall'n, the lost, and now the captive Zara,
And now abandon'd——Say, what then is Osmyn?

*Osm. A fatal wretch—A huge, stupendous ruin,
That tumbling on its prop, crush'd all beneath,
And bore contiguous palaces to earth.*

*Zara. Yet thus, thus fall'n, thus levell'd with the vilest,
If I have gain'd thy love, 'tis glorious ruin;
Ruin! 'tis still to reign, and to be more
A queen; for what are riches, empire, power,
But larger means to gratify the will?
The steps on which we tread, to rise and reach
Our wish; and that obtain'd, down with the scaffolding
Of sceptres, crowns, and thrones; they've serv'd their
And are, like lumber, to be left and scorn'd. [end,*

*Osm. Why was I made the instrument to throw
In bonds the frame of this exalted mind?*

*Zara. We may be free; the conqueror is mine;
In chains unseen I hold him by the heart,
And can unwind and strain him as I please.
Give me thy love, I'll give thee liberty.*

*Osm. In vain you offer, and in vain require
What neither can bestow. Set free yourself,
And leave a slave the wretch that would be so.*

Zara. Thou canst not mean so poorly as thou talk'st.

Osm. Alas! you know me not.

*Zara. Not who thou art:
But what this last ingratitude declares,
This groveling baseness—Thou say'st true, I know
Thee not; for what thou art yet wants a name:*

* The lines printed in Italics are not in the original, but are now given to the reader as delivered in the representation at Drury-lane Theatre.

By something so unworthy and so vile,
That to have lov'd thee makes me yet more lost,
Than all the malice of my other fate.
Traitor, monster, cold perfidious slave;
A slave not daring to be free; nor dares
To love above him; for 'tis dangerous.
'Tis that, I know; for thou dost look, with eyes
Sparkling desire, and trembling to possess.
I know my charms have reach'd thy very soul,
And thrill'd thee through with darting fires; but thou
Dost fear so much, thou dar'st not wish.' The king!
There, there's the dreadful sound, the king's thy rival!

Sel. Madam, the king is here, and entering now.

Zara. As I could wish; by Heav'n I'll be reveng'd.

Enter the King, Perez, and attendants.

King. Why does the fairest of her kind withdraw
Her shining from the day, to gild this scene
Of death and night? Ha! what disorder's this?
Somewhat I heard of king and rival mention'd.
What's he that dares be rival to the king,
Or lift his eyes to like where I adore? [slave..

Zara. There, he, your prisoner, and that was my

King. How? better than my hopes! Does she accuse
him? [Aside..

Zara. Am I become so low by my captivity,
And do your arms so lessen what they conquer,
That Zara must be made the sport of slaves?
And shall the wretch, whom yester sun beheld
Waiting my nod, the creature of my pow'r,
Presume to-day to plead audacious love,
And build bold hopes on my dejected fate?

King. Better for him to tempt the rage of Heav'n,
And wrench the bolt red-hissing from the hand
Of him that thunders, than but to think that insolence.
'Tis daring for a god.' Hence to the wheel
With that Ixion, who aspires to hold
Divinity embrac'd; to whips and prisons
Drag him with speed, and rid me of his face.

[*Guards seize Osmyn, and exeunt.*

Zara. Compassion led me to bemoan his state,
Whose former fate had merited much more:

30 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

And, through my hopes in you, I undertook
He should be set at large; thence sprung his insolence,
And what was charity, he constru'd love.

King. Enough; his punishment be what you please.
But let me lead you from this place of sorrow,
To one where young delights attend, 'and joys,
' Yet new, unborn, and blooming in the bud,
' Which wait to be full-blown at your approach,
' And spread, like roses, to the morning sun:
Where ev'ry hour shall roll in circling joys,
And love shall wing the tedious-wasting day.
Life, without love, is load; and time stands still:
What we refuse to him, to death we give;
And then, then only, when we love, we live. [*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, a prison.

OSMYN, with a paper.

BUT now, and I was clos'd within the tomb
That holds my father's ashes; and but now,
Where he was pris'ner, I am too imprison'd.
Sure 'tis the hand of Heav'n that leads me thus,
And for some purpose points out these remembrances.
In a dark corner of my cell I found
This paper; what it is this light will shew.

"If my Alphonso"—Ha! [*Reading.*]

"If my Alphonso live, restore him, Heav'n;

"Give me more weight, crush my declining years

"With bolts, with chains, imprisonment and want;

"But bless my son, visit not him for me.

It is his hand; this was his pray'r——yet more:

"Let ev'ry hair, which sorrow by the roots [*Reading.*]

"Tears from my hoary and devoted head,

"Be doubled in thy mercies to my son:

"Not for myself, but him, hear me, all-gracious—

'Tis wanting what should follow—Heav'n shou'd follow,
 But 'tis torn off—Why shou'd that word alone
 Be torn from this petition? 'Twas to Heav'n,
 But Heav'n was deaf, Heav'n heard him not; but thus,
 Thus as the name of Heav'n from this is torn,
 So did it tear the ears of mercy from
 His voice, shutting the gates of pray'r against him.
 If piety be thus debarr'd access
 On high, and of good men the very best
 Is singled out to bleed, and bear the scourge,
 What is reward? Or what is punishment?
 But who shall dare to tax eternal justice!
 Yet I may think—I may, I must; for thought
 Precedes the will to think, and error lives
 Ere reason can be born. ' Reason, the power
 ' To guess at right and wrong, the twinkling lamp
 ' Of wand'ring life, that winks and wakes by turns,
 ' Fooling the follower, betwixt shade and shining.'
 What noise! Who's there? My friend? How cam'st
 thou hither?

Enter Heli.

Heli. The time's too precious to be spent in telling.
 The captain, influenc'd by Almeria's power,
 Gave order to the guards for my admittance.

Osm. How does Almeria? But I know she is
 As I am. Tell me, may I hope to see her?

Heli. You may. Anon, at midnight, when the king
 Is gone to rest, and Garcia is retir'd,
 ' (Who takes the privilege to visit late,
 ' Presuming on a bridegroom's right)' she'll come.

Osm. She'll come; 'tis what I wish, yet what I fear.
 She'll come; but whither, and to whom? Oh, Heav'n!
 To a vile prison, and a captive wretch;
 To one, whom, had she never known, she had
 Been happy. Why, why was that heav'nly creature
 Abandon'd o'er to love what Heav'n forsakes?
 Why does she follow, with unwearied steps,
 One, who has tir'd misfortune with pursuing?
 ' One driven about the world, like blasted leaves
 ' And chaff, the sport of adverse winds; 'till late,

At

32 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

‘ At length imprison’d in some cleft of rock,
‘ On earth it rests, and rots to silent dust.’

Heli. Have hopes, and hear the voice of better fate.
I’ve learn’d there are disorders ripe for mutiny
Among the troops, who thought to share the plunder,
Which Manuel to his own use and avarice
Converts. This news has reach’d Valentia’s frontiers,
Where many of your subjects, long oppress’d
With tyranny, and grievous impositions,
Are risen in arms, and call for chiefs to head
And lead them to regain their rights and liberty.

Osm. By Heav’n thou’st rous’d me from my lethargy,
The spirit which was deaf to my own wrongs,
And the loud cries of my dead father’s blood,
‘ Deaf to revenge—nay, which refus’d to hear
‘ The piercing sighs and murmurs of my love
‘ Yet unenjoy’d; what not Almeria could
‘ Revive or raise,’ my people’s voice has waken’d.

Heli. Our posture of affairs, and scanty time
My lord, require you should compose yourself.

Osm. Oh, my Antonio! I am all on fire;
My soul is up in arms, ready to charge
And bear amidst the foe with conqu’ring troops.
I hear ’em call to lead ’em on to liberty,
To victory; their shouts and clamours rend
My ears, and reach the Heav’ns. Where is the king?
Where is Alphonso? Ha! where? where indeed?
Oh, I could tear and burst the strings of life,
To break these chains. Off, off, ye stains of royalty;
Off, slavery. Oh, curse! that I alone
Can beat and flutter in my cage, when I
Would soar and stoop at victory beneath.

Heli. Abate this ardour, Sir, or we are lost.
Zara, the cause of your restraint, may be
The means of liberty restor’d. That gain’d,
Occasion will not fail to point out ways
For your escape. Mean time, I’ve thought already
With speed and safety to convey myself,
Where not far off some malcontents hold council
Nightly, who hate this tyrant; some, who love

Anselmo's memory, and will, for certain,
When they shall know you live, assist your cause.

Osm. My friend and counsellor, as thou think'st fit,
So do. I will, with patience, wait my fortune.

Heli. When Zara comes, abate of your aversion.

Osm. I hate her not, nor can dissemble love :
But as I may I'll do. ' I have a paper

' Which I would shew thee, friend, but that the fight
' Would hold thee here, and clog thy expedition.

' Within I found it, by my father's hand

' 'Twas writ ; a pray'r for me, wherein appears

' Paternal love prevailing o'er his sorrows ;

' Such sanctity, such tendernefs, so mix'd

' With grief, as would draw tears from inhumanity.

' *Heli.* The care of Providence sure left it there,

' To arm your mind with hope. Such piety

' Was never heard in vain. Heav'n has in store

' For you those blessings it withheld from him.

' In that assurance live ; which time, I hope,

' And our next meeting will confirm.

Osm. Farewel,

My friend ; the good thou dost deserve, attend thee.

[Exit Heli.]

I've been to blame, and question'd with impiety

The care of Heav'n. Not so my father bore

More anxious grief. This should have better taught me ;

' This lesson, in some hour of inspiration

' By him set down, when his pure thoughts were borne,

' Like fumes of sacred incense o'er the clouds,

' And wafted thence, on angel's wings, thro' ways

' Of light, to the bright source of all. For there

' He in the book of prescience saw this day ;

' And waking to the world and mortal sense,

' Left this example of his resignation,'

This his last legacy to me : which, here,

I'll treasure as more worth than diadems,

Or all extended rule of regal pow'r.

Enter Zara, veil'd.

Osm. What brightness breaks upon me thus through
And promises a day to this dark dwelling ? [shades,
Is it my love ?—

Zara.

34 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

Zara. Oh, that thy heart had taught [*Lifting her veil.*
Thy tongue that saying !

Ofm. *Zara !* I am betray'd by my surprize.

Zara. What, does my face displease thee ?
That, having seen it, thou dost turn thy eyes
Away, as from deformity and horror ?

If so, this sable curtain shall again
Be drawn, and I will stand before thee, seeing,
And unseen. Is it my love ? Ask again

That question ; speak again in that soft voice ;
And look again with wishes in thy eyes.

Oh, no ! thou canst not, for thou seest me now,
As she whose savage breast hath been the cause
Of these thy wrongs ; as she whose barb'rous rage
Has loaded thee with chains and galling irons.

‘ Well dost thou scorn me, and upbraid my falseness ;

‘ Could one who lov'd, thus torture whom she lov'd ?

‘ No, no, it must be hatred, dire revenge,

‘ And detestation, that could use thee thus.

‘ So dost thou think ; then do but tell me so ;

‘ Tell me, and thou shalt see how I'll revenge

‘ Thee on this false one, how I'll stab and tear

‘ This heart of flint, 'till it shall bleed ; and thou

‘ Shalt weep for mine, forgetting thy own miseries.’

Ofm. You wrong me, beauteous *Zara*, to believe
I bear my fortunes with so low a mind,

‘ As still to meditate revenge on all

‘ Whom chance, or fate, working by secret causes,

‘ Has made, per-force, subservient to the end

‘ The heav'nly pow'rs allot me ;’ no, not you,

But destiny and inauspicious stars

Have cast me down to this low being. Or

Granting you had, from you I have deserv'd it.

Zara. Canst thou forgive me then ? wilt thou believe
So kindly of my fault, to call it madness ?

Oh, give that madness yet a milder name,

And call it passion ! then, be still more kind,

And call that passion love.

Ofm. Give it a name,

Or being, as you please, such I will think it.

[*ness,*

Zara. Oh, thou dost wound me more with this thy good-
Than

Than e'er thou couldst with bitterest reproaches;
Thy anger could not pierce thus to my heart.

Ofm. Yet I could wish——

Zara. Haste me to know it; what?

Ofm. That at this time I had not been this thing.

Zara. What thing?

Ofm. This slave.

Zara. Oh, Heav'n my fears interpret

This thy silence; somewhat of high concern,
Long fashioning within thy labouring mind,
And now just ripe for birth, my rage has ruin'd.
Have I done this? Tell me, am I so curs'd?

Ofm. Time may have still one fated hour to come,
Which, wing'd with liberty, might overtake
Occasion past.

Zara. Swift as occasion, I
Myself will fly; and earlier than the morn,
Wake thee to freedom. 'Now 'tis late; and yet
'Some news few minutes past, arriv'd, which seem'd
'To shake the temper of the king—Who knows
'What racking cares disease a monarch's bed?
'Or love, that late at night still lights his lamp,
'And strikes his rays thro' dusk and folded lids,
'Forbidding rest, may stretch his eyes awake,
'And force their balls abroad at this dead hour.
'I'll try.

Ofm. I have not merited this grace;
Nor, should my secret purpose take effect,
Can I repay, as you require, such benefits.

Zara. Thou canst not owe me more, nor have I more
To give, than I've already lost. But now,
So does the form of our engagements rest,
Thou hast the wrong till I redeem thee hence;
That done, I leave thy justice to return
My love. Adieu. [Exit.

Ofm. This woman has a soul
Of godlike mould, intrepid and commanding,
And challenges, in spite of me, my best
Esteem; 'to this, she's fair, few more can boast
'Of personal charms, or with less vanity
'Might hope to captivate the hearts of kings;'

But

But she has passions which outstrip the wind,
 And tear her virtues up, as tempests root
 The sea. I fear, when she shall know the truth,
 Some swift and dire event of her blind rage
 Will make all fatal. But behold, she comes
 For whom I fear, to shield me from my fears,
 The cause and comfort of my boding heart.

Enter Almeria.

My life, my health, my liberty, my all!
 How shall I welcome thee to this sad place?
 How speak to thee the words of joy and transport?
 How run into thy arms, withheld by fetters;
 Or take thee into mine, while I'm thus manacled
 And pinion'd like a thief or murderer?
 Shall I not hurt or bruise thy tender body,
 And stain thy bosom with the rust of these
 Rude irons? Must I meet thee thus, Almeria?

Alm. Thus, thus; we parted, thus to meet again.
 Thou told'st me thou would'st think how we might meet
 To part no more——Now we will part no more;
 For these thy chains, or death, shall join us ever.

Osm. Hard means to ratify thy word!—Oh, cruelty!
 ' That ever I should think beholding thee
 ' A torture!—Yet, such is the bleeding anguish
 ' Of my heart, to see thy sufferings——Oh, Heav'n!
 ' That I could almost turn my eyes away,
 ' Or wish thee from my sight.

Alm. Oh, say not so!
 ' Tho' 'tis because thou lov'st me. Do not say,
 ' On any terms, that thou dost wish me from thee.
 ' No, no, 'tis better thus, that we together
 ' Feed on each other's heart, devour our woes
 ' With mutual appetite; and mingling in
 ' One cup the common stream of both our eyes,
 ' Drink bitter draughts, with never-flaking thirst;
 ' Thus better, than for any cause to part.
 ' What dost thou think? Look not so tenderly
 ' Upon me—speak, and take me in thy arms——
 ' Thou canst not; thy poor arms are bound, and strive
 ' In vain with thy remorseless chains, which gnaw
 ' And eat into thy flesh, fest'ring thy limbs
 ' With rankling rust.'

Osm.

Osm. Oh! O——

Alm. Give me that sigh.

Why dost thou heave, and stifle in thy griefs?

Thy heart will burst, thy eyes look red, and start;

Give thy soul way, and tell me thy dark thought.

Osm. For this world's rule, I would not wound thy breast
With such a dagger as then stuck my heart.

Alm. Why? why? To know it, cannot wound me more
Than knowing thou hast felt it. Tell it me,
—Thou giv'st me pain with too much tenderness.

Osm. And thy excessive love distracts my sense.
Oh, wouldst thou be less killing, soft, or kind,
Grief could not double thus his darts against me.

Alm. Thou dost me wrong, and grief too robs my
If there he shoot not every other shaft; [heart,
Thy second self shou'd feel each other wound,
And woe should be in equal portions dealt.
I am thy wife—

Osm. Oh, thou hast search'd too deep:
There, there I bleed; there pull the cruel cords,
That strain my cracking nerves; engines and wheels,
That piece-meal grind, are beds of down and balm
To that soul-racking thought.

Alm. Then I am curs'd
Indeed, if that be so; if I'm thy torment,
Kill me, then, kill me, dash me with thy chains,
Tread on me: 'What, am I the bosom-snake
' That sucks thy warm life-blood, and gnaws thy heart;
' Oh, that thy words had force to break those bonds,
' As they have strength to tear this heart in sunder;
' So shou'dst thou be at large from all oppression.'
Am I, am I of all thy woes the worst?

Osm. My all of bliss, my everlasting life,
Soul of my soul, and end of all my wishes,
Why dost thou thus unman me with thy words,
' And melt me down to mingle with thy weepings?
' Why dost thou ask? Why dost thou talk thus piercingly?'
Thy sorrows have disturb'd thy peace of mind,
And thou dost speak of miseries impossible.

Alm. Didst not thou say that racks and wheels were
balm

And beds of ease, to thinking me thy wife?

Ofm. No, no; nor shou'd the subtlest pains that hell
 Or hell-born malice can invent, extort
 A wish or thought from me to have thee other.
 But thou wilt know what harrows up my heart:
 Thou art my wife——nay, thou art yet my bride——
 The sacred union of connubial love
 Yet unaccomplish'd: 'his mysterious rites
 'Delay'd; nor has our hymeneal torch
 'Yet lighted up his last most grateful sacrifice;
 'But dash'd with rain from eyes, and swal'd with sighs,
 'Burns dim, and glimmers with expiring light.'
 Is this dark cell a temple for that god?
 Or this vile earth an altar for such offerings?
 This den for slaves, this dungeon damp'd with woes;
 'Is this our marriage bed? are these our joys?'
 Is this to call thee mine? Oh, hold, my heart!
 To call thee mine? Yes; thus even thus to call
 Thee mine, were comfort, joy, extremest extasy.
 But, Oh, thou art not mine, not e'en in misery;
 And 'tis deny'd to me to be so blest'd,
 As to be wretched with thee.

Alm. No; not that
 Th' extremest malice of our fate can hinder:
 That still is left us, and on that we'll feed,
 As on the leavings of calamity.
 There we will feast and smile on past distress,
 And hug, in scorn of it, or mutual ruin.

Ofm. Oh, thou dost talk, my love, as one resolv'd,
 Because not knowing danger. But look forward;
 Think of to-morrow, when thou shalt be torn
 From these weak, struggling, unextended arms:
 Think how my heart will heave, and eyes will strain,
 To grasp and reach what is deny'd my hands:
 'Think how the blood will start, and tears will gush,
 'To follow thee, my separating soul.'
 Think how I am, when thou shalt wed with Garcia!
 Then will I smear these walls with blood, disfigure
 And dash my face, and rive my clotted hair,
 Break on this flinty floor my throbbing breast,
 And grovel with gash'd hands to scratch a grave,
 'Stripping my nails to tear this pavement up,'
 And bury me alive.

Alm.

Alm. Heart-breaking horror!

Osm. Then Garcia shall lie panting on thy bosom,
Luxurious, revelling amidst thy charms;
'And thou per-force must yield, and aid his transport.'
Hell! Hell! have I not cause to rage and rave?
What are all racks, and wheels, and whips to this?
'Are they not soothing softness, sinking ease,
'And wafting air to this?' Oh, my Almeria!
What do the damn'd endure, but to despair,
But knowing Heav'n, to know it lost for ever?

Alm. Oh, I am struck; thy words are bolts of ice,
Which shot into my breast, now melt and chill me.
'I chatter, shake, and faint with thrilling fears.
'No, hold me not——Oh, let us not support,
'But sink each other, deeper yet, down, down,
'Where levell'd low, no more we'll lift our eyes,
'But prone, and dumb, rot the firm face of earth
'With rivers of incessant scalding rain.'

Enter Zara, Perez, Selim.

Zar. Somewhat of weight to me requires his freedom?
Dare you dispute the king's command? Behold
The royal signet.

Per. I obey; yet beg
Your majesty one moment to defer
Your ent'ring, 'till the princess is return'd
From visiting the noble prisoner.

Zar. Ha!
What say'st thou?

Osm. We are lost! undone! discover'd!
'Retire, my life, with speed——Alas, we're seen:'
Speak of compassion, let her hear you speak
Of interceding for me with the king;
Saying something quickly to conceal our loves,
If possible——

Alm.——I cannot speak.

Osm. Let me
Conduct you forth, as not perceiving her,
But till she's gone; then bless me thus again.

Zar. Trembling and weeping as he leads her forth!
Confusion in his face, and grief in hers!
'Tis plain I've been abus'd——Death and destruction!
'How shall I search into this mystery?

40 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

' The bluest blast of pestilential air
' Strike, damp, deaden her charms, and kill his eyes ;'
Perdition catch 'em both, and ruin part 'em.

Os. This charity to one unknown, and thus

[*Aloud to Almeria as she goes out.*

Distress'd, Heav'n will repay ; all thanks are poor.

[*Exit Almeria.*

Zar. Damn'd, damn'd dissembler ! Yet I will be calm,
Choak in my rage, and know the utmost depth
Of this deceiver——You seem much surpriz'd.

Os. At your return so soon and unexpected !

Zara. And so unwish'd, unwanted too it seems.
Confusion ! Yet I will contain myself.
You're grown a favourite since last we parted ;
Perhaps I'm saucy and intruding ——

Os.——— Madam !

Zara. I did not know the princess' favourite.
Your pardon, Sir——mistake me not ; you think
I'm angry ; you're deceiv'd. I came to set
You free ; but shall return much better pleas'd,
To find you have an interest superior.

Os. You do not come to mock my miseries ?

Zar. I do.

Os. I could at this time spare your mirth.

Zar. I know thou couldst ; but I'm not often pleas'd.
And will indulge it now. What miseries ?
Who would not be thus happily confin'd,
To be the care of weeping majesty ;
'To have contending queens, at dead of night,
Forsake their down, to wake with wat'ry eyes,
And watch like tapers o'er your hours of rest ?
Oh, curse ! I cannot hold——

Os. Come, 'tis too much.

Zar. Villain !

Os. How, Madam !

Zar. Thou shalt die.

Os. I thank you.

[*live.*

Zar. Thou ly'st, for now I know for whom thou'dst

Os. Then you may know for whom I die.

Zar. Hell ! Hell !

Yet I'll be calm——Dark and unknown betrayer !

But

41

But now the dawn begins, and the slow hand
Of Fate is stretch'd to draw the veil, and leave
Thee bare, the naked mark of public view.

Osm. You may be still deceiv'd, 'tis in my pow'r—
Chain'd as I am, to fly from all my wrongs
And free myself, at once, from misery,
And you of me.

Zar. Ha! say'st thou—but I'll prevent it—
Who waits there? As you will answer it, look this
flave [To the guard.

Attempt no means to make himself away.
I've been deceiv'd. The public safety now
Requires he shou'd be more confin'd, and none,
No, not the princess, suffer'd or to see
Or speak with him. I'll quit you to the king.
Vile and ingrate! too late thou shalt repent
The base injustice thou hast done my love:
Yes, thou shalt know, spite of thy past distress,
And all those ills which thou so long hast mourn'd;
Heav'n has no rage like love to hatred turn'd,
Nor hell a fury like a woman scorn'd. *Exeunt.*

END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE, *a room of state.*

Zara, Selim.

ZÁRA.

THOU hast already rack'd me with thy stay ;
Therefore require me not to ask thee twice :
Reply at once to all. What is concluded ?

Sel. Your accusation highly has incens'd
The king, and were alone enough to urge
The fate of Osiny; but to that, fresh news
Has since arriv'd, of more revolted troops.
'Tis certain Heli too is fled, and with him
(Which breeds amazement and distraction) some
Who bore high offices of weight and trust,
Both in the state and army. This confirms
The king in full belief of all you told him

42 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

Concerning Osmyn, and his correspondence
With them who first began the mutiny.
Wherefore a warrant for his death is sign'd ;
And order given for public execution.

Zar. Ha ! haste thee ! fly, prevent his fate and mine ;
Find out the king, tell him I have of weight
More than his crown t' impart ere Osmyn die.

Sel. It needs not, for the king will straight be here,
And as to your revenge, not his own int'rest,
Pretend to sacrifice the life of Osmyn.

Zar. What shall I say ? Invent, contrive, advise
Somewhat to blind the king, and save his life,
In whom I live. ' Spite of my rage and pride,
' I am a woman, and a lover still.
' Oh ! 'tis more grief but to suppose his death,
' Than still to meet the rigour of his scorn.
' From my despair my anger had its source ;
' When he is dead I must despair for ever.
' For ever ! that's despair——it was distrust
' Before ; distrust will ever be in love,
' And anger in distrust ; both short-liv'd pains.
' But in despair, and ever-during death,
' No term, no bound, but infinite of woe.
' Oh, torment, but to think ! what then to bear ?
' Not to be borne'——Devise the means to shun it,
Quick ; or, by Heav'n, this dagger drinks thy blood.

Sel. My life is yours, nor wish I to preserve it,
But to serve you. I have already thought.

Zar. Forgive my rage ; I know thy love and truth.
But say, what's to be done ? or when, or how,
Shall I prevent or stop th' approaching danger ?

Sel. You must still seem most resolute and fix'd
On Osmyn's death ; too quick a change of mercy
Might breed suspicion of the cause. Advise
That execution may be done in private.

Zar. On what pretence ?

Sel. Your own request's enough.
However, for a colour, tell him, you
Have cause to fear his guards may be corrupted,
And some of them bought off to Osmyn's interest,
Who at the place of execution will
Attempt to force his way for an escape ;

The state of things will countenance all suspicions.
 Then offer to the king to have him strangled
 In secret by your mutes; and get an order,
 That none but mutes may have admittance to him.
 I can no more, the king is here. Obtain
 This grant, and I'll acquaint you with the rest.

Enter King, Gonfalez, and Perez.

King. Bear to the dungeon those rebellious slaves,
 'Th' ignoble curs, that yelp to fill the cry,
 'And spend their mouths in barking tyranny.'
 But for their leaders, Sancho and Ramirez,
 Let 'em be led away to present death.
 Perez, see it perform'd.

Gonf. Might I presume,
 Their execution better were deferr'd,
 'Till Osmyn die. Mean time we may learn more
 Of this conspiracy.

King. Then be it so.
 Stay, soldier; they shall suffer with the Moor.
 Are none return'd of those that follow'd Heli?

Gonf. None, Sir. Some papers have been since discover'd

In Roderigo's house, who fled with him,
 Which seem to intimate, as if Alphonso
 Were still alive, and arming in Valentia:
 Which wears indeed this colour of a truth,
 They who are fled have that way bent their course.
 Of the same nature divers notes have been
 Dispers'd to amuse the people; whereupon
 Some, ready of belief, have rais'd this rumour:
 That being sav'd upon the coast of Afric,
 He there disclos'd himself to Albucacim,
 And by a secret compact made with him,
 Open'd and urg'd the way to this invasion;
 While he himself, returning to Valentia
 In private, undertook to raise this tumult.

Zar. Ha! hear'st thou that? Is Osmyn then Alphonso?
 'Oh, heav'n! a thousand things occur at once
 'To my remembrance now, that make it plain.'
 Oh, certain death for him, as sure despair
 For me, if it be known——If not, what hope
 Have I? Yet 'twere the lowest baseness now,

44 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

To yield him up—No, I will conceal him,
And try the force of yet more obligations.

Gonz. 'Tis not impossible. Yet it may be
That some impostor has usurp'd his name.
Your beauteous captive Zara can inform,
If such an one, so 'scaping, was receiv'd,
At any time in Albucacim's court.

King. Pardon, fair excellence, this long neglect :
An unforeseen, unwelcome hour of business,
Has thrust between us and our while of love ;
But wearing now apace with ebbing sand,
Will quickly waste and give again the day.

Zar. You're too secure : the danger is more imminent
Than your high courage suffers you to see ;
While Osmyn lives, you are not safe.

King. His doom
Is pass'd, if you revoke it not, he dies.

Zar. 'Tis well. By what I heard upon your entrance,
I find I can unfold what yet concerns
You more. One, who did call himself Alphonso,
Was cast upon my coast, as is reported,
And oft had private conference with the king ;
To what effect I knew not then : but he,
Alphonso, secretly departed, just
About the time our arms embark'd for Spain.
What I know more is, that a triple league
Of strictest friendship was profess'd between
Alphonso, Heli, and the traitor Osmyn.

King. Public report is ratify'd in this.

Zar. And Osmyn's death requir'd of strong necessity.

King. Give order strait, that all the pris'ners die.

Zar. Forbear a moment, somewhat more I have
Worthy your private ear, and this your minister.

King. Let all, except Gonzalez, leave the room.

[Exit Perez, &c.]

Zar. I am your captive, and you've us'd me nobly ;
And in return of that, tho' otherwise
Your enemy, ' I have discover'd Osmyn
' His private practice and conspiracy
' Against your state : and fully to discharge
' Myself of what I've undertaken, now'
I think it fit to tell you, that your guards

Are

Are tainted ; some among 'em have resolv'd
To rescue Osmyn at the place of death.

King. Is treason then so near us as our guards ?

Zar. Most certain ; tho' my knowledge is not yet
So ripe, to point at the particular men.

King. What's to be done ?

Zar. That too I will advise.

I have remaining in my train some mutes,
A present once from the sultana queen,
In the grand signior's court. These from their infancy
Are practis'd in the trade of death ; and shall
(As their custom is) in private strangle
Osmyn.

Gons. My lord, the queen advises well.

King. What off'ring, or what recompence remains
In me, that can be worthy so great services ?
To cast beneath your feet the crown you've sav'd,
Tho' on the head that wears it, were too little.

Zar. Of that hereafter : but, mean time, 'tis fit
You give strict charge, that none may be admitted
To see the pris'ner, but such mutes as I
Shall send.

King. Who waits there ?

Enter Perez.

King. On your life, take heed
That only Zara's mutes, or such who bring
Her warrant, have admittance to the Moor.

Zar. They, and no other, not the princess' self.

Per. Your majesty shall be obey'd.

King. Retire.

[Exit Perez.]

Gons. That interdiction so particular
Pronounc'd with vehemence against the princess,
Shou'd have more meaning than appears barefac'd.
This king is blinded by his love, and heeds
It not. *[Aside.]*—Your majesty sure might have spar'd
The last restraint : you hardly can suspect
The princess is confederate with the Moor.

Zar. I've heard her charity did once extend
So far, to visit him at his request.

Gons. Ha !

King. How ! She visit Osmyn ! What, my daughter ?

Sel. Madam, take heed ; or you have ruin'd all.

Zar

Zar. And after did solicit you on his
Behalf.—

King. Never. You have been misinform'd.

Zar. Indeed! Then 'twas a whisper spread by some
Who wish'd it so; a common art in courts.
I will retire and instantly prepare
Instruction for my ministers of death.

[*Exit Zara and Selima.*

Gons. There's somewhat yet of mystery in this;
Her words and actions are obscure and double,
Sometimes concur, and sometimes disagree:
I like it not.

[*Aside.*

King. What dost thou think, *Gonsalez*?
Are we not much indebted to this fair one?

Gons. I am a little flow of credit, Sir,
In the sincerity of woman's actions.
Methinks this lady's hatred to the Moor
Disquiets her too much; which makes it seem
As if she'd rather that she did not hate him.
I wish her mutes are meant to be employ'd
As she pretends—I doubt it now—Your guards
Corrupted! How? By whom? Who told her so?
I'th' evening *Osmyn* was to die; at midnight
She begg'd the royal signet to release him;
I'th' morning he must die again; ere noon
Her mutes alone must strangle him, or he'll
Escape. This put together suits not well.

King. Yet that there's truth in what she has discover'd
Is manifest from every circumstance.
This tumult, and the lords who fled with *Heli*,
Are confirmation;—that *Alphonso* lives,
Agrees expressly too with her report.

Gons. I grant it, Sir; and doubt not, but in rage
Of jealousy, she has discover'd what
She now repents. It may be I'm deceiv'd.
But why that needless caution of the princess?
What if she had seen *Osmyn*? Tho' t'were strange;
But if she had, what was't to her? Unless
She fear'd her stronger charms might cause the Moor's
Affection to revolt.

King. I thank thee, friend.

There's

There's reason in thy doubt, and I am warn'd.—
But think'st thou that my daughter saw this Moor?

Gonf. If Osmyn be, as Zara has related,
Alphonso's friend, 'tis not impossible
But she might wish, on his account, to see him.

King. Say'st thou? By Heav'n, thou hast rous'd a
thought,
That like a sudden earthquake shakes my frame.
Confusion! then my daughter's an accomplice,
And plots in private with this hellish Moor.

Gonf. That were too hard a thought—but see, she
'Twere not amiss to question her a little, [comes—
And try, howe'er, if I've divin'd aright.
If what I fear be true, she'll be concern'd
For Osmyn's death, as he's Alphonso's friend:
Urge that, to try if she'll solicit for him.

Enter Almeria and Leonora.

King. Your coming has prevented me, Almeria;
I had determin'd to have sent for you.
Let your attendant be dismiss'd; I have [Leonora retires.
To talk with you. Come near; why dost thou shake?
What mean those swell'd and red-fleck'd eyes, that look
As they had wept in blood, and worn the night
In waking anguish? Why this on the day
Which was design'd to celebrate thy nuptials;
But that the beams of light are to be stain'd
With reeking gore, from traitors on the rack?
Wherefore I have deferr'd the marriage-rites;
Nor shall the guilty horrors of this day
Prophane that jubilee.

Alm. All days to me
Henceforth are equal: this, the day of death,
To-morrow, and the next, and each that follows
Will undistinguish'd roll, and but prolong
One hated line of more extended woe.

King. Whence is thy grief? Give me to know the
And look thou answer me with truth; for know [cause;
I am not unacquainted with thy falsehood.
Why art thou mute? Base and degen'rate maid!

Gonf. Dear Madam, speak, or you'll incense the King.

Alm. What is't to speak? Or wherefore should I speak?
What mean these tears but grief unutterable?

King.

48 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

King. They are the dumb confessions of thy guilty mind ;

They mean thy guilt: and say thou wert confed'rate
With damn'd conspirators to take my life.

Oh, impious parricide ! Now canst thou speak ?

Alm. O earth, behold, I kneel upon thy bosom,
And bend my flowing eyes to stream upon
Thy face, imploring thee that thou wilt yield ;
Open thy bowels of compassion, take
Into thy womb the last and most forlorn
Of all thy race. Hear me, thou common parent
——I have no parent else——be thou a mother,
And step between me and the curse of him
Who was—who was, but is no more a father ;
But brands my innocence with horrid crimes ;
And for the tender names of child and daughter,
Now calls me murderer and parricide.

King. Rise, I command thee—and if thou wou
Acquit thyself of those detested names,
Swear thou hast never seen that foreign dog,
Now doom'd to die, that most accursed Osmyn.

Alm. Never, but as with innocence I might,
And free of all bad purposes. So Heaven's
My witness.

King. Vile equivocating wretch !
With innocence ! Oh, patience ! hear—she owns it !
Confesses it ! By Heav'n, I'll have him rack'd,
Torn, mangled, flay'd, impal'd—all pains and tortures
That wit of man and dire revenge can think,
Shall he, accumulated, underbear.

Alm. Oh, I am lost.——There fate begins to wound.

King. Hear me, then ; if thou canst reply ; know,
traitrefs,

I'm not to learn that curs'd Alphonso lives ;
Nor am I ignorant what Osmyn is——

Alm. Then all is ended, and we both must die.
Since thou'rt reveal'd, alone thou shalt not die.
And yet alone would I have dy'd, Heav'n knows,
Repeated deaths, rather than have reveal'd thee.
' Yes, all my father's wounding wrath, tho' each
' Reproach cuts deeper than the keenest sword,
' And cleaves my heart, I wou'd have borne it all,

' Nay

- Nay all the pains that are prepar'd for thee ;
- To the remorseless rack I wou'd have giv'n
- This weak and tender flesh, to have been bruise'd
- And torn, rather than have reveal'd thy being.'

King. Hell, hell! Do I hear this, and yet endure!
 What, dar'st thou to my face avow thy guilt?
 Hence, ere I curse—fly my just rage with speed;
 Lest I forget us both, and spurn thee from me.

Alm. And yet a father! Think, I am your child!
 Turn not your eyes away—look on me kneeling;
 Now curse me if you can, now spurn me off.
 Did ever father curse his kneeling child?
 Never; for always blessings crown that posture.
 • Nature inclines, and half way meets that duty,
 • Stooping to raise from earth the filial reverence;
 • For bended knees returning folding arms,
 • With pray'rs, and blessings, and paternal love.'
 Oh, hear me then, thus crawling on the earth——

King. Be thou advis'd, and let me go, while yet
 The light impression thou hast made remains.

Alm. No, never will I rise, nor lose this hold,
 'Till you are mov'd, and grant that he may live.

King. Ha! Who may live? Take heed! No more of
 For on my soul he dies, tho' thou and I, [that;
 And all shou'd follow to partake his doom.
 Away, off, let me go——Call her attendants.

[*Leonora and women return.*]

Alm. Drag me; harrow the earth with my bare bosom;
 I will not go 'till you have spar'd my husband.

King. Ha! 'What say'st thou?' Husband! 'Husband!
 damnation!'

• 'What husband!' Which? Who?

Alm. He, he is my husband.

King. 'Poison and daggers!' Who?

Alm. Oh——

[*Faints.*]

• *Gonf.* Help, support her.'

Alm. Let me go, let me fall, sink deep—I'll dig,
 I'll dig a grave, and tear up death; 'I will;
 • I'll scrape, 'till I collect his rotten bones,
 • And cloath their nakedness with my own flesh;
 Yes, I will strip off life, and we will change:

E

I will

50 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

I will be death ; then, tho' you kill my husband,
He shall be mine still, and for ever mine.

King. What husband ? Whom dost thou mean ?

Gonf. She raves !

Alm. ' Oh, that I did.' Osmyn, he is my husband.

King. Osmyn !

Alm. Not Osmyn, but Alphonso, is my dear
And wedded husband——Heav'n, and air, and seas,
Ye winds and waves, I call ye all to witness.

King. Wilder than winds or waves thyself dost rave.
Shou'd I hear more, I too shou'd catch thy madness.

' Yet somewhat she must mean of dire import,
' Which I'll not hear, 'till I am more at peace.'

Watch her returning sense, and bring me word ;
And look that she attempt not on her life. [*Exit King.*

Alm. Oh, stay, yet stay ; hear me, I am not mad.
I wou'd to Heav'n I were——He's gone.

Gonf. Have comfort.

Alm. Curs'd be that tongue that bids me be of com-
fort ;

Curs'd my own tongue, that could not move his pity ;
Curs'd these weak hands, that could not hold him here ;
For he is gone to doom Alphonso's death.

Gonf. Your too excessive grief works on your fancy,
And deludes your sense. Alphonso, if living,
Is far from hence, beyond your father's pow'r.

Alm. Hence, thou detested, ill-tim'd flatterer ;
Source of my woes : thou and thy race be curs'd ;
But doubly thou, who couldst alone have policy
And fraud to find the fatal secret out,
And know that Osmyn was Alphonso.

Gonf. Ha !

Alm. Why dost thou start ? What dost thou see or
Was it the doleful bell, tolling for death ? [hear ?
Or dying groans from my Alphonso's breast ?
See, see, look yonder ! where a grizzled, pale,
And ghastly herd glares by, all smear'd with blood,
Gasp'ng as it would speak ; and after, see ;
Behold a damp, dead hand has dropp'd a dagger :
I'll catch it—Hark ! a voice cries murder ! ah !
My father's voice ! hollow it sounds, and calls

Me

Me from the tomb—I'll follow it ; for there
I shall again behold my dear Alphonso.

[*Exeunt Almeria and Leonora.*]

Gons. She's greatly griev'd ; nor am I less surpriz'd.
Osmyn, Alphonso ! No ; she over rates
My policy ; I ne'er suspected it :
Nor now had known it, but from her mistake.
Her husband too ! Ha ! Where is Garcia then ?
And where the crown that shou'd descend on him,
To grace the line of my posterity ?
Hold, let me think——if I should tell the king——
Things come to this extremity : his daughter
Wedded already——what if he should yield ?
Knowing no remedy for what is past,
And urg'd by nature pleading for his child,
With which he seems to be already shaken.
And tho' I know he hates beyond the grave
Anselmo's race ; yet if——that If concludes me.
To doubt, when I may be assur'd, is folly.
But how prevent the captive queen, who means
To set him free ? Ay, now 'tis plain. O well
Invented tale ! He was Alphonso's friend.
This subtle woman will amuse the king.
If I delay——'twill do——or better so.
One to my wish. Alonzo, thou art welcome.

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. The king expects your lordship.

Gons. 'Tis no matter.

I'm not i'the way at present, good Alonzo.

Alon. If't please your lordship, I'll return, and say
I have not seen you.

Gons. Do, my best Alonzo.

Yet stay, I would——but go ; anon will serve——

Yet I have that requires thy speedy help.

I think thou wou'dst not stop to do me service.

Alon. I am your creature.

Gons. Say thou art my friend.

I've seen thy sword do noble execution.

Alon. All that it can your lordship shall command.

Gons. Thanks ; and I take thee at thy word. Thou'rt
Amongst the followers of the captive queen, [seen,
Dumb men, who make their meaning known by signs.

52 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

Alon. I have, my lord.

Gon. Couldst thou procure, with speed
And privacy, the wearing garb of one
Of those, tho' purchas'd by his death, I'd give
Thee such reward, as shou'd exceed thy wish. [ship?

Alon. Conclude it done. Where shall I wait your lord-

Gon. At my apartment. Use thy utmost diligence;
And say I've not been seen--Haste, good Alonzo. [*Ex. Al.*
So, this can hardly fail. Alphonso slain,
The greatest obstacle is then remov'd.
Almeria widow'd, yet again may wed;
And I yet fix the crown on Garcia's head. [*Exit.*

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE, *a room of state.*

Enter King, Perez, and Alonzo.

KING.

NOT to be found! In an ill hour he's absent.
None, say you? none! What, not the fav'rite
eunuch?

Nor she herself, nor any of her mutes,
Have yet requir'd admittance?

Per. None, my lord.

King. Is Osmyn so dispos'd as I commanded?

Per. Fast bound in double chains, and at full length
He lies supine on earth; with as much ease
She might remove the centre of this earth,
As loose the rivets of his bonds.

King. 'Tis well.

[*A mute appears, and seeing the king, retires.*

Ha! stop, and seize that mute; Alonzo, follow him.
Ent'ring he met my eyes, and started back,
Frighted, and fumbling one hand in his bosom,
As to conceal th' importance of his errand.

[*Alonzo follows him, and returns with a paper.*

Alon. A bloody proof of obstinate fidelity!

King. What dost thou mean?

Alon.

Alon. Soon as I seiz'd the man,
He snatch'd from out his bosom this—and strove
With rash and greedy haste, at once, to cram
The morsel down his throat. I caught his arm,
And hardly wrench'd his hand to wring it from him;
Which done, he drew a poignard from his side,
And on the instant plung'd it in his breast.

King. Remove the body thence, ere Zara see it.

Alon. I'll be so bold to borrow his attire;

'Twill quit me of my promise to Gonfalez. [*Aside. Exit.*]

Per. Whate'er it is, the king's complexion turns.'

King. How's this? My mortal foe beneath my roof!

[*Having read the letter.*]

Oh, give me patience, all ye powers! No, rather
Give me new rage, implacable revenge,
And trebled fury——Ha! who's there?

Per. My lord.

[*pry*]

King. Hence, slave! how dar'st thou bide, to watch and
Into how poor a thing a king descends,
How like thyself, when passion treads him down?
Ha! stir not, on thy life; for thou wert fix'd,
And planted here, to see me gorge this bait,
And lash against the hook—By Heav'n, you're all
Rank traitors; thou art with the rest combin'd;
Thou knew'st that Osmyn was Alphonso; knew'st
My daughter privately with him conferr'd;
And wert the spy and pander to their meeting.

Per. By all that's holy, I'm amaz'd——

King. Thou ly'st.

Thou art accomplice too with Zara; here
Where she sets down—*Still will I set thee free*—[*Reading.*]
That somewhere is repeated—*I have power*
O'er them that are thy guards—Mark that, thou traitor.

Per. It was your majesty's command I should
Obey her order.——

King. [*Reading.*]——*And still will I set*
Thee free, Alphonso——Hell! curs'd, curs'd Alphonso!
False and perfidious Zara! Strumpet daughter!
Away, begone, thou feeble boy, fond love;
All nature, softness, pity and compassion,
This hour I throw ye off, and entertain
Fell hate within my breast, revenge and gall.

54 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

By Heav'n, I'll meet, and counterwork this treachery.
Hark thee, villain, traitor—answer me, slave.

Per. My service has not merited those titles.

King. Dar'st thou reply? 'Take that'—thy service!
thine! ' [Strikes him.]

What's thy whole life, thy soul, thy all, to my
One moment's ease? Hear my command; and look
That thou obey, or horror on thy head:
Drench me thy dagger in Alphonso's heart.
Why dost thou start? Resolve, or——

Per. Sir, I will.

King. 'Tis well—that when she comes to set him free,
His teeth may grin, and mock at her remorse.

[Perez going.]

—Stay thee—I've farther thought—I'll add to this,
And give her eyes yet greater disappointment:
When thou hast ended him, bring me his robe;
And let the cell where she'll expect to see him
Be darken'd, so as to amuse the sight.
I'll be conducted thither——mark me well——
There with his turbant, and his robe array'd,
And laid along, as he now lies, supine,
I shall convict her, to her face, of falsehood.
When for Alphonso's she shall take my hand,
And breathe her sighs upon my lips for his;
Sudden I'll start and dash her with her guilt.
But see, she comes. I'll shun th' encounter; thou
Follow me, and give heed to my direction. [Exeunt.]

Enter Zara and Selim.

Za. 'The mute not yet return'd!' ha! 'twas the king,
The king that parted hence! frowning he went;
'His eyes like meteors roll'd, then darted down
'Their red and angry beams; as if his sight
'Would, like the raging dog-star, scorch the earth,
'And kindle ruin in its course:' Dost think
He saw me?

Sel. Yes: but then, as if he thought
His eyes had err'd, he hastily recall'd
Th' imperfect look, and sternly turn'd away.

Za. Shun me when seen! I fear thou hast undone me.
'Thy shallow artifice begets suspicion,
'And, like a cobweb veil, but thinly shades

' The

' The face of thy design ; alone disguising
 ' What should have ne'er been seen ; imperfect mischief !
 ' Thou, like the adder, venomous and deaf,
 ' Hast stung the traveller, and after hear'st
 ' Not his pursuing voice ; e'en when thou think'st
 ' To hide, the rustling leaves and bended grafs
 ' Confess and point the path which thou hast crept.
 ' Oh, fate of fools ! officious in contriving ;
 ' In executing, puzzled, lame, and lost.'

Scl. Avert, it Heav'n, that you should ever suffer
 For my defect ; or that the means which I
 Devis'd to serve, should ruin your design.
 Prescience is Heav'n's alone, not giv'n to man.
 If I have fail'd, in what, as being man,
 I needs must fail ; impute not as a crime
 My nature's want, but punish nature in me ;
 I plead not for a pardon, and to live,
 But to be punish'd and forgiven. Here, strike ;
 I bare my breast to meet your just revenge,

Za. I have not leisure now to take so poor
 A forfeit as thy life ; somewhat of high
 And more important fate requires my thought.
 ' When I've concluded on myself, if I
 ' Think fit, I'll leave thee my command to die.'
 Regard me well ; and dare not to reply
 To what I give in charge ; for I'm resolv'd.
 Give order that the two remaining mutes
 Attend me instantly, with each a bowl
 Of such ingredients mix'd, as will with speed
 Benumb the living faculties, and give
 Most easy and inevitable death.
 Yes, Osmyn, yes ; be Osmyn or Alphonso,
 I'll give thee freedom, if thou dar'st be free :
 Such liberty as I embrace myself,
 Thou shalt partake. Since fates no more afford ;
 I can but die with thee, to keep my word. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE opening, shews the prison.

Enter Gofalez disguised like a mute, with a dagger.

Gon. Nor centinel, nor guard ! the doors unbarr'd !
 And all as still, as at the noon of night !
 Sure death already has been busy here.

There

56 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

There lies my way; that door too is unlock'd. [*Looking in.*
 Ha! sure he sleeps—all's dark within, save what
 A lamp, that feebly lifts a sickly flame,
 By fits reveals—his face seems turn'd, to favour
 Th' attempt: I'll steal and do it unperceiv'd.
 What noise! somebody coming? 't, Alonzo?
 Nobody. Sure he'll wait without——I would
 'Twere done—I'll crawl, and sting him to the heart,
 Then cast my skin, and leave it there to answer it. [*Goes in.*

Enter Garcia and Alonzo.

Gar. Where, where, Alonzo, where's my father?
 where

The king? Confusion! all is on the rout!
 All's lost, all ruin'd by surprize and treachery.
 Where, where is he! Why dost thou mislead me?

Alon. My lord, he enter'd but a moment since,
 And could not pass me unperceiv'd—What ho!
 My lord, my lord! What ho! my lord Gonzalez!

Enter Gonzalez bloody.

Gon. Perdition choak your clamours——whence this
 Garcia! [*rudeness?*

Gar. Perdition, slavery, and death,
 Are ent'ring now our doors. Where is the king?
 What means this blood; and why this face of horror?

Gon. No matter—give me first to know the cause
 Of these your rash, and ill-tim'd exclamations.

Gar. The eastern gate is to the foe betray'd,
 Who, but for heaps of slain that choak the passage,
 Had enter'd long ere now, and borne down all
 Before 'em, to the palace walls. Unless
 The king in person animate our men,
 Granada's lost; and to confirm this fear,
 The traitor Perez, and the captive Moor,
 Are through a postern fled, and join the foe.

Gon. Would all were false as that; for whom you call
 The Moor is dead. That Osmyn was Alphonso;
 In whose heart's blood this poignard yet is warm.

Gar. Impossible; for Osmyn was, while flying,
 Pronounc'd aloud by Perez for Alphonso.

Gon. Enter that chamber, and convince your eyes,
 How much report has wrong'd your easy faith.

[*Garcia goes in.*

Alon.

Alon. My lord, for certain truth Perez is fled;
And has declar'd, the cause of his revolt
Was to revenge a blow the king had giv'n him.

Gar. [*Returning.*] Ruin and horror! Oh, heart-wounding fight!

Gon. What says my son? What ruin? Ha! what horror?

Gar. Blasted my eyes, and speechless be my tongue,
Rather than or to see, or to relate
This deed—Oh, dire mistake! Oh, fatal blow!
The king——

Gon. Alon. The king!

Gar. Dead, welt'ring, drown'd in blood.
See, see, attir'd like Osmyrn, where he lies. [*They look in.*
Oh, whence, or how, or wherefore was this done?
But what imports the manner or the cause?
Nothing remains to do, or to require,
But that we all should turn our swords against
Ourselves, and expiate with our own, his blood.

Gon. Oh, wretch! Oh, curs'd and rash deluded fool!
On me, on me turn your avenging swords.
I, who have spilt my royal master's blood,
Should make atonement by a death as horrid,
And fall beneath the hand of my own son.

Gar. Ha! what! atone this murder with a greater!
The horror of that thought has damp'd my rage.
' The earth already groans to bear this deed;
' Oppress her not, nor think to stain her face
' With more unnatural blood. Murder my father!
' Better with this to rip up my own bowels,
' And bathe it to the hilt, in far less damnable
' Self-murder.'

Gon. Oh, my son! from the blind dotage
Of a father's fondness these ills arose.
For thee I've been ambitious, base, and bloody:
For thee I've plung'd into this sea of sin;
Stemming the tide with only one weak hand,
While t'other bore the crown (to wreath thy brow)
Whose weight has sunk me, ere I reach'd the shore.

Gar. Fatal ambition! Hark! the foe is enter'd: [*Shout.*
The shrillness of that shout speaks them at hand.
' We have no time to search into the cause
' Of this surprising and most fatal error.

' What's

58 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

‘ What’s to be done? the king’s death known, would
 ‘ The few remaining soldiers with despair, [strike
 ‘ And make them yield to mercy of the conqueror.’

Alon. My lord, I’ve thought how to conceal the body.
 Require me not to tell the means, till done,
 Lest you forbid what you may then approve.

[Goes in. Shout.

Gon. They shout again! Whate’er he means to do,
 ‘Twere fit the soldiers were amus’d with hopes;
 And in the mean time fed with expectation
 To see the king in person at their head.

Gar. Were it a truth, I fear ’tis now too late.
 But I’ll omit no care, nor haste,; and try,
 Or to repel their force, or bravely die. [Exit Garcia.

Re-enter Alonzo.

Gon. What hast thou done, Alonzo?

Alon. Such a deed,
 As but an hour ago I’d not have done,
 Though for the crown of universal empire.
 But what are kings reduc’d to common clay?
 Or who can wound the dead?—I’ve from the body
 Sever’d the head, and in an obscure corner
 Dispos’d it, muffled in the mute’s attire,
 Leaving to view of them who enter next,
 Alone the undistinguishable trunk:
 Which may be still mistaken by the guards
 For Osmyn, if in seeking for the king,
 They chance to find it.

Gon. ’Twas an act of horror;
 And of a piece with this day’s dire misdeeds.
 But ’tis no time to ponder or repent.
 Hasten thee, Alonzo, hasten thee hence with speed,
 To aid my son. I’ll follow with the last
 Reserve, to reinforce his arms: at least,
 I shall make good and shelter his retreat.

[Exeunt severally.

*Enter Zara, followed by Selim, and two mutes bearing
 the bowls.*

Za. Silence and solitude are every where.
 Through all the gloomy ways and iron doors
 That hither lead, nor human face nor voice
 Is seen or heard. ‘ A dreadful din was wont

‘ To

' To grate the sense, when enter'd here, from groans
 ' And howls of slaves condemn'd ; from clink of chains,
 ' And crash of rusty bars and creaking hinges :
 ' And ever and anon the sight was dash'd
 ' With frightful faces, and the meagre looks
 ' Of grim and ghastly executioners.
 ' Yet more this stillness terrifies my soul,
 ' Than did that scene of complicated horrors.
 ' It may be that the cause of this my errand
 ' And purpose, being chang'd from life to death,
 ' Had also wrought this chilling change of temper.
 ' Or does my heart bode more ? What can it more
 ' Than death ?'

Let 'em set down the bowls, and warn Alphonso
 That I am here—so. You return and find

[Mutes going in.]

The king ; tell him, what he requir'd, I've done,
 And wait his coming to approve the deed. *[Exit Selim.]*

Enter Mutes.

Zara. What have you seen ? Ha ! wherefore stare you
 thus *[The mutes return and look affrighted.]*

With haggard eyes ? Why are your arms across ?
 Your heavy and desponding heads hung down ?
 Why is't you more than speak in these sad signs ?
 Give me more ample knowledge of this mourning.

[They go to the scene, which opening, she perceives the body.]

Ha ! prostrate ! bloody ! headless ! Oh———I'm lost.
 Oh, Osmyn ! Oh, Alphonso ! Cruel fate !
 Cruel, cruel, Oh, more than killing object !
 I came prepar'd to die, and see thee die—
 Nay, came prepar'd myself to give thee death—
 But cannot bear to find thee thus, my Osmyn——
 Oh, this accurs'd, this base, this treach'rous king !

Enter Selim.

Selim. I've fought in vain, for no where can the king
 Be found———

Zar. Get thee to hell, and seek him there. *[Stabs him.]*
 His hellish rage had wanted means to act,
 But for thy fatal and pernicious counsel.

Sel. You thought it better then———but I'm rewarded.
 The mute you sent, by some mischance was seen,
 And

60 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

And forc'd to yield your letter with his life ;
 I found the dead and bloody body stripp'd——
 My tongue falters, and my voice fails——I sink——
 Drink not the poison—for Alphonso is—— [Dies.]

Zar. As thou art now—and I shall quickly be.
 'Tis not that he is dead : for 'twas decreed
 We both should die. Nor is't that I survive ;
 I have a certain remedy for that.

But, Oh, he dy'd unknowing in my heart.
 He knew I lov'd, but knew not to what height :
 Nor that I meant to fall before his eyes,
 A martyr and a victim to my vows.

Insensible of this last proof he's gone ;
 ' Yet fate alone can rob his mortal part
 ' Of sense ; his soul still sees and knows each purpose,
 ' And fix'd event, of my persisting faith.'

'Then wherefore do I pause ? Give me the bowl.

[*A mute kneels and gives one of the bowls.*

Hover a moment, yet, thou gentle spirit,
 Soul of my love, and I will wait thy flight.
 This to our mutual bliss, when join'd above. [Drinks.]

Oh, friendly draught, already in my heart.

Cold, cold ; my veins are icicles and frost.

I'll creep into his bosom, lay me there ;

Cover us close—or I shall chill his breast,

And fright him from my arms—See, see, he slides

Still farther from me ; look, he hides his face,

I cannot feel it—quite beyond my reach,—

Oh, now he's gone, and all is dark—— [Dies.]

[*The mutes kneel and mourn over her.*

Enter Almeria and Leonora.

Alm. Oh, let me seek him in this horrid cell ;
 For in the tomb, or prison, I alone
 Must hope to find him.

Leon. Heavens ! what dismal scene
 Of death is this ? The eunuch Selim slain !

Alm. Shew me, for I am come in search of death ;
 But want a guide ; for tears have dimm'd my sight.

Leon. Alas, a little farther, and behold
 Zara all pale and dead ! two frightful men,
 Who seem the murderers, kneel weeping by ;
 Feeling remorse too late for what they've done.

But, Oh, forbear—lift up your eyes no more;
But haste away, fly from this fatal place,
Where miseries are multiply'd; return,
Return, and look not on; for there's a dagger
Ready to stab the sight, and make your eyes
Rain blood.——

Alm. Oh, I foreknow, foresee that object.
Is it at last then so? Is he then dead?
'What, dead at last? quite, quite, for every dead?
'There, there, I see him; there he lies, the blood
'Yet bubbling from his wounds—Oh, more than savage!
'Had they or hearts or eyes that did this deed?
'Could eyes endure to guide such cruel hands?
'Are not my eyes guilty alike with theirs,
'That thus can gaze, and yet not turn to stone?
——I do not weep! The springs of tears are dry'd;
And of a sudden I am calm, as if
All things were well; and yet my husband's murder'd!
Yes, yes, I know to mourn! I'll fluce this heart,
The source of woe, and let the torrent loose.
——Those men have left to weep! they look on me!
I hope they murder all on whom they look.
Behold me well; your bloody hands have err'd,
And wrongfully have slain those innocents:
I am the sacrifice design'd to bleed,
And come prepar'd to yield my throat——They shake
Their heads in sign of grief and innocence!

[*They point at the bowl on the ground.*
And point! What mean they? Ha! a cup; Oh, well,
I understand what med'cine has been here.
Oh, noble thirst! yet greedy to drink all——
——Oh, for another draught of death——'What mean
they? [*They point at the other cup.*
'Ha! point again!' 'tis there, and full, I hope.
Thanks to the lib'ral hand that fill'd thee thus,
I'll drink my glad acknowledgment——

Leon. Oh, hold
For mercy's sake, upon my knee I beg——

Alm. With thee the kneeling world should beg in vain.
Seest thou not there? Behold who prostrate lies,
And pleads against thee; who shall then prevail?
Yet I will take a cold and parting leave
From his pale lips; I'll kiss him ere I drink,

Lest the rank juice should blister on my mouth,
And stain the colour of my last adieu.

Horror ! a headless trunk ! nor lips nor face,

[Coming near the body, starts and lets fall the cup.]

But spouting veins, and mangled flesh ! Oh, Oh !

Enter Alphonso, Heli, Perez, with Garcia prisoner.

Guards and attendants.

Alph. Away, stand off, where is she ? let me fly,
Save her from death, and snatch her to my heart.

Alm. Oh !

Alph. Forbear ; my arms alone shall hold her up,
Warm her to life, and wake her into gladness.

‘ Oh, let me talk to thy reviving sense

‘ The words of joy and peace ; warm thy cold beauties

‘ With the new flushing ardour of my cheek ;

‘ Into thy lips pour the soft trickling balm

‘ Of cordial sighs ; and reinspire thy bosom

‘ With the breath of love. Shine, awake, Almeria,’

Give a new birth to thy long-shaded eyes,

Then double on the day reflected light.

Alm. Where am I ? Heav’n ! what does this dream intend ?

Alph. Oh, may’st thou never dream of less delight,
Nor ever wake to less substantial joys.

Alm. Giv’n me again from death ! Oh, all ye pow’rs,
Confirm this miracle ! Can I believe

My fight ‘ against my fight ? and shall I trust

‘ That sense, which in one instant shews him dead

‘ And living ?’—Yes, I will ; I’ve been abus’d

With apparitions and affrighting phantoms :

This is my lord, my life, my only husband,

I have him now, and we no more will part.

My father too shall have compassion——

Alph. Oh, my heart’s comfort ; ’tis not giv’n to this
Frail life, to be intirely blest’d. E’en now,

In this extremest joy my soul can taste,

Yet I am dash’d to think that thou must weep ;

Thy father fell where he design’d my death.

Gonzalez and Alonzo, both of wounds

Expiring, have, with their last breath, confess’d

The just decrees of Heav’n, which on themselves

Has turn’d their own most bloody purposes.

Nay, I must grant, 'tis fit you should be thus——

[*She weeps.*]

‘ Let ’em remove the body from her sight.’

Ill-fated Zara ! Ha ! a cup ! Alas !

Thy error then is plain ! but I were flint

Not to o’erflow in tribute to thy memory.

Oh, Garcia !——

Whose virtue has renounc’d thy father’s crimes,

Seest thou, how just the hand of Heav’n has been ?

Let us, who through our innocence survive,

Still in the paths of honour persevere,

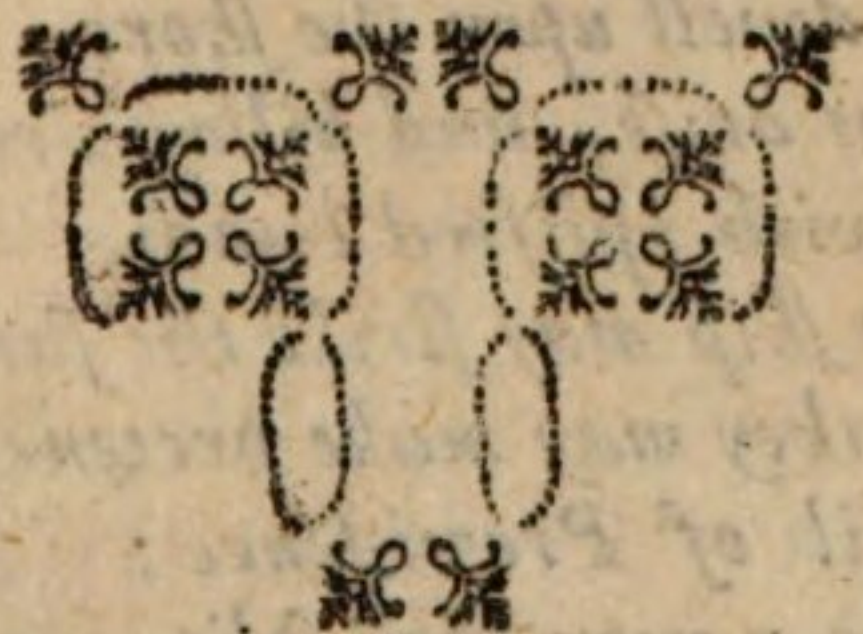
And not from past or present ills despair ;

For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds ;

And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

END of the FIFTH ACT.



64
E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by ALMERIA.

TH E tragedy thus done, I am, you know,
No more a princess, but in statu quo;
And now as unconcern'd this mourning wear,
As if indeed a widow, or an heir.
I've leisure, now, to mark your sev'ral faces,
And know each critic by his sour grimaces.
To poison plays, I see them where they sit,
Scatter'd, like ratsbane, up and down the pit;
While others watch, like parish-searchers hir'd,
To tell of what disease the play expir'd.
Oh, with what joy they run to spread the new
Of a damn'd poet, and departed muse!
But if he 'scape, with what regret they're seiz'd!
And how they're disappointed, when they're pleas'd!
Critics to plays for the same end resort,
That surgeons wait on trials in a court:
For innocence condemn'd they've no respect,
Provided they've a body to dissect.
As Sussex men, that dwell upon the shore,
Look out when storms arise, and billows roar,
Devoutly praying, with uplifted hands,
That some well-laden ship may strike the sands,
To whose rich cargo they may make pretence,
And fatten on the spoils of Providence:
So critics throng to see a new play split,
And thrive and prosper on the wrecks of wit.
Small hope our poet from these prospects draws;
And therefore to the fair commends his cause.
Your tender hearts to mercy are inclin'd,
With whom, he hopes, this play will favour find,
Which was an off'ring to the sex design'd.



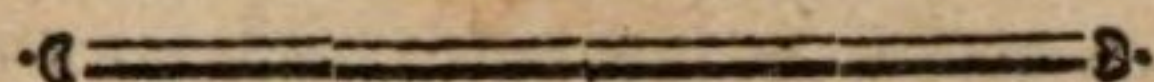


Published for Bells British Theatre July 10. 1776.

Thornthwaite Sculpsit.

*M^{rs} YATES in the Character of CALISTA.
Strike home, & I will bless thee for the blow.*

4.
BELL'S EDITION.



THE
Nicholas
FAIR PENITENT;

A TRAGEDY, by N. ROWE, Esq.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

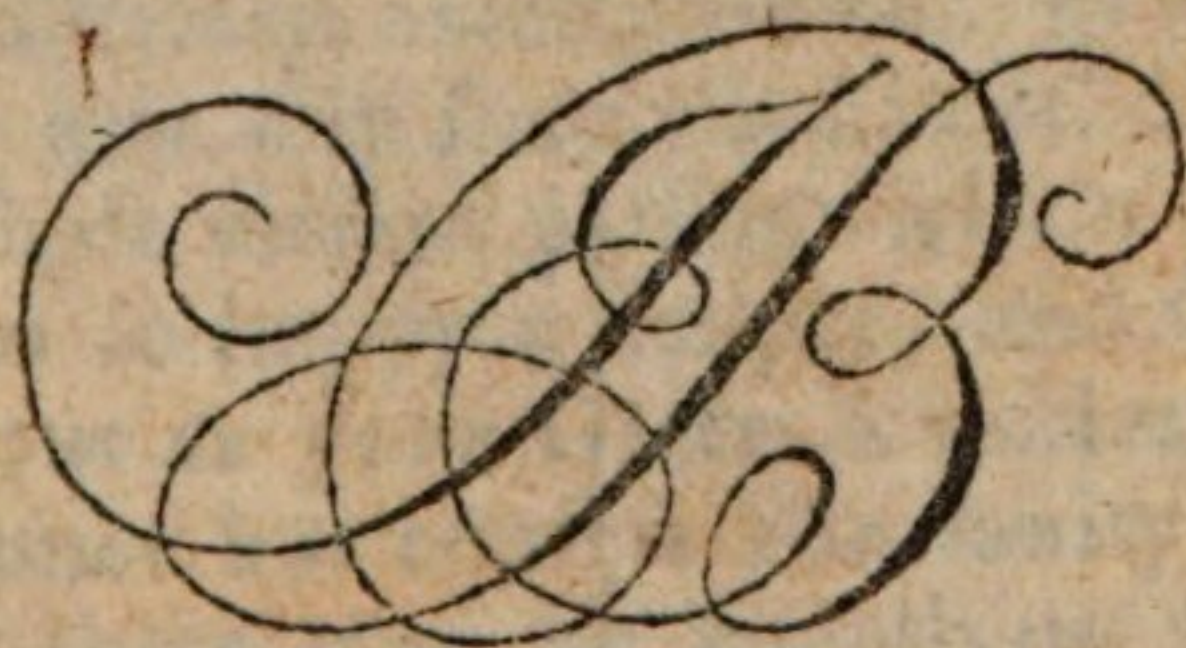
Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

Quin morere, ut merita es; ferroque averte dolorem.

VIRG. ÆN. Lib. iv.

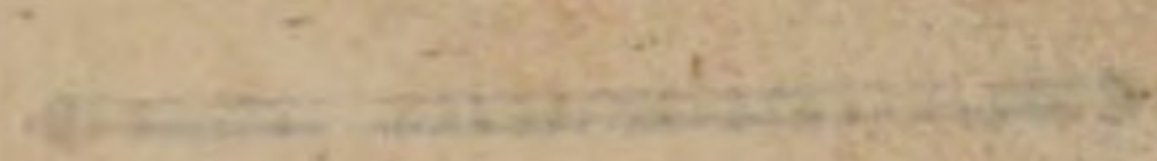


L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCCLXXVI.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



ASTOR LENOX TILDEN FOUNDATION

1215 Broadway, New York City

Acquired from the

Library of the

City of New York

Gift of the City of New York
to the Astor Lenox Tilden Foundation
in 1921

Printed by the City of New York
in 1921

To her Grace the

D U C H E S S

O F

O R M O N D.

MADAM,

THE privilege of poetry (or it may be the vanity of the pretenders to it) has given 'em a kind of right to pretend at the same time, to the favour of those, whom their high birth and excellent qualities have placed in a very distinguishing manner above the rest of the world. If this be not a received maxim, yet I am sure I am to wish it were, that I may have at least some kind of excuse for laying this tragedy at your Grace's feet. I have too much reason to fear that it may prove but an indifferent entertainment to your Grace, since, if I have any way succeeded in it, it has been in describing those violent passions which have been always strangers to so happy a temper, and so noble and so exalted a virtue as your Grace is mistress of. Yet, for all this, I cannot but confess the vanity which I have, to hope that there may be something so moving in the misfortunes and distress of the play, as may be not altogether unworthy of your Grace's pity. This is one of the main designs of tragedy; and to excite this generous pity in the greatest minds, may pass for some kind of success in this way of writing. I am sensible of the presumption I am guilty of by this hope, and

how much it is that I pretend to in your Grace's approbation; if it be my good fortune to meet with any little share of it, I shall always look upon it as much more to me than the general applause of the theatre, or even the praise of a good critick. Your Grace's name is the best protection this play can hope for; since the world, ill-natured as is, agrees in an universal respect and deference for your Grace's person and character. In so censorious an age as this is, where malice furnishes out all the public conversations, where everybody pulls and is pulled to pieces of course, and where there is hardly such a thing as being merry, but at another's expence; yet by a public and uncommon justice to the Duchess of Ormond, her name has never been mentioned, but as it ought, though she has beauty enough to provoke detraction from the fairest of her own sex, and virtue enough to make the loose and dissolute of the other (a very formidable party) her enemies. Instead of this, they agree to say nothing of her but what she deserves. That her spirit is worthy of her birth; her sweetness, of the love and respect of all the world; her piety, of her religion; her service, of her royal mistress; and her beauty and truth, of her lord; that, in short, every part of her character is just, and that she is the best reward for one of the greatest heroes this age has produced. This, Madam, is what you must allow people every where to say; those whom you shall leave behind you in England will have something further to add, the loss we shall suffer by your Grace's journey to Ireland; the Queen's pleasure, and the impatient wishes of that nation, are about to deprive us of our public ornaments. But there is no arguing against reasons so prevalent as these. Those who shall lament your Grace's absence, will yet acquiesce in the wisdom and justice of her Majesty's choice: among all whose royal favours none could be so agreeable, upon a thousand accounts, to that people, as the Duke of Ormond. With what joy, what acclamations shall they meet a governor, who, beside their former obligations to his family, has so lately ventured his life and fortune for their preservation! What duty, what submission, shall they not pay to that authority which

which the queen has delegated to a person so dear to them? And with what honour, what respect, shall they receive your Grace, when they look upon you as the noblest and best pattern her Majesty could send them, of her own royal goodness, and personal virtues? They shall behold your Grace with the same pleasure the English shall take, whenever it shall be their good fortune to see you return again to your native country. In England, your Grace is become a public concern; and as your going away will be attended with a general sorrow, so your return shall give as general a joy; and to none of those many, more than to,

Madam,

Your Grace's most obedient, and

Most humble servant,

N. ROWE.

P R O-

2002.4

P R O L O G U E.

LONG has the fate of kings and empires been
 The common bus'ness of the tragic scene,
 As if misfortune made the throne her seat
 And none could be unhappy, but the great.
 Dearly, 'tis true, each buys the crown he wears,
 And many are the mighty monarch's cares :
 By foreign foes and home-bred factions prest,
 Few are the joys he knows, and short his hours of rest,
 Stories like these with wonder we may hear ;
 But far remote, and in a higher sphere,
 We ne'er can pity what we ne'er can share :
 Like distant battles of the Pole and Swede,
 Which frugal citizens o'er coffee read,
 Careless for who should fail or who succeed.
 Therefore an humbler theme our author chuse,
 A melancholy tale of private woes :
 No princes here lost royalty bemoan,
 But you shall meet with sorrows like your own :
 Here see imperious love his vassals treat
 As hardly as ambition does the great ;
 See how succeeding passions rage by turns,
 How fierce the youth with joy and rapture burns,
 And how to death, for beauty lost, he mourns.
 Let no nice taste the poet's arts arraign,
 If some frail vicious characters he feign :
 Who writes should still let nature be his care.
 Mix shades with lights, and not paint all things fair,
 But shew you men and women as they are.
 With deference to the fair, he bade me say,
 Few to perfection ever found the way :
 Many in many parts are known t'excel,
 But 'twere too hard for one to act all well :
 Whom justly life would through each scene commend,
 The maid, the wife, the mistress, and the friend :
 This age, 'tis true, has one great instance seen,
 And Heav'n, in justice, made that one a queen.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Drury-Lane. Covent-Garden.

<i>Sciolto</i> , a nobleman of <i>Genoa</i> , father to <i>Calista</i> - -	Mr. J. Aickin.	Mr. Barry.
<i>Altamont</i> , a young lord, in love with <i>Calista</i> , and de- signed her hus- band by <i>Sciolto</i>	Mr. Brereton.	Mr. Wroughton.
<i>Horatio</i> , his friend	Mr. Bensley.	Mr. Aickin.
<i>Lothario</i> a young lord, and enemy to <i>Altamont</i> - -	Mr. Reddish.	Mr. Lewis.
<i>Rossano</i> , his friend	Mr. Whitefield.	Mr. Young.

W O M E N.

<i>Calista</i> , daughter to <i>Sciolto</i> - - -	Mrs. Yates.	Mrs. Barry.
<i>Lavinia</i> , sister to <i>Altamont</i> , and wife to <i>Horatio</i> - -	Miss Sherry.	Mrs. Bulkley.
<i>Lucilla</i> , confidant to <i>Calista</i> - - -	Mrs. Johnston.	Miss Dayes.

Servants to *Sciolto*.

SCENE, *Sciolto's* palace and garden, with some part of
the street near it, in *Genoa*.

T H E
F A I R P E N I T E N T.

A C T I.

SCENE, *a garden belonging to Sciolto's palace.*

Enter Altamont and Horatio.

ALTAMONT.

LET this auspicious day be ever sacred,
No mourning, no misfortunes happen on it:
Let it be mark'd for triumphs and rejoicings;
Let happy lovers ever make it holy,
Choose it to bless their hopes and crown their wishes,
This happy day, that gives me my Calista.

Hor. Yes, Altamont; to-day thy better stars
Are join'd to shed their kindest influence on thee;
Sciolto's noble hand, that rais'd thee first,
Half dead and drooping o'er thy father's grave,
Completes its bounty, and restores thy name
To that high rank and lustre which it boasted,
Before ungrateful Genoa had forgot
The merit of thy god-like father's arms;
Before that country, which he long had serv'd
In watchful councils and in winter camps,
Had cast off his white age to want and wretchedness,
And made their court to factions by his ruin.

Alt. Oh, great Sciolto! Oh, my more than father!
Let me not live, but at thy very name
My eager heart springs up, and leaps with joy.
When I forget the vast, vast debt I owe thee——
Forget! (but 'tis impossible) then let me
Forget the use and privilege of reason,
Be driven from the commerce of mankind,
To wander in the desert among brutes,
' To bear the various fury of the seasons,

The

' The night's unwholesome dew and noon-day's heat,'
To be the scorn of earth, and curse of heav'n!

Hor. So open, so unbounded was his goodness,
It reach'd even me, because I was thy friend.
When that great man I lov'd, thy noble father,
Bequeath'd thy gentle sister to my arms,
His last dear pledge and legacy of friendship,
That happy tie made me Sciolto's son;
He call'd us his, and with a parent's fondness,
Indulg'd us in his wealth, blest'd us with plenty,
Heal'd all our cares, and sweeten'd love itself.

Alt. By Heav'n, he found my fortunes so abandon'd,
That nothing but a miracle could raise 'em:
My father's bounty, and the state's ingratitude,
Had stripp'd him bare, nor left him e'en a grave.
Undone myself, and sinking with his ruin,
I had no wealth to bring, nothing to succour him,
But fruitless tears.

Hor. Yet what thou couldst thou didst,
And didst it like a son; when his hard creditors,
Urg'd and assisted by Lothario's father,
(Foe to thy house, and rival of their greatness)
By sentence of the cruel law forbid
His venerable corpse to rest in earth,
Thou gav'st thyself a ransom for his bones;
With piety uncommon, didst give up
Thy hopeful youth to slaves who ne'er knew mercy,
Sour, unrelenting, money-loving villains,
Who laugh at human nature and forgiveness,
And are, like fiends, the factors of destruction.
Heav'n, who beheld the pious act, approv'd it,
And bade Sciolto's bounty be its proxy,
To bless thy filial virtue with abundance.

Alt. But see, he comes, the author of my happiness,
The man who sav'd my life from deadly sorrow,
Who bids my days be blest with peace and plenty,
And satisfies my soul with love and beauty.

Enter Sciolto; he runs to Altamont, and embraces him.

Sci. Joy to thee, Altamont! Joy to myself!
Joy to this happy morn, that makes thee mine;
That kindly grants what nature had deny'd me,
And makes me father of a son like thee.

Alt.

Alt. My father ! Oh, let me unlade my breast,
 Pour out the fulness of my soul before you ;
 Shew ev'ry tender, ev'ry grateful thought,
 This wond'rous goodness stirs. But 'tis impossible,
 And utterance all is vile ; since I can only
 Swear you reign here, but never tell how much.

' *Sci.* It is enough ; I know thee, thou art honest ;
 ' Goodness innate, and worth hereditary
 ' Are in thy mind ; thy noble father's virtues
 ' Spring freshly forth, and blossom in thy youth.

' *Alt.* Thus Heav'n from nothing rais'd his fair creation,
 ' And then, with wond'rous joy, beheld its beauty,
 ' Well pleas'd to see the excellence he gave.'

Sci. Oh, noble youth ! I swear, since first I knew thee,
 Ev'n from that day of sorrow, when I saw thee
 Adorn'd and lovely in thy filial tears,
 The mourner and redeemer of thy father,
 I set thee down, and seal'd thee for my own :
 Thou art my son, ev'n near me as Calista.

Horatio and Lavinia too are mine ; [*Embraces Hor.*
 All are my children, and shall share my heart.
 But wherefore waste we thus this happy day ?
 The laughing minutes summon thee to joy,
 And with new pleasures court they as they pass ;
 Thy waiting bride ev'n chides thee for delaying,
 And swears thou com'st not with a bridegroom's haste.

Alt. Oh, could I hope there was one thought of
 Altamont,
 One kind remembrance in Calista's breast,
 The winds, with all their wings, would be too slow
 To bear me to her feet. For, Oh, my father !
 Amidst the stream of joy that bears me on,
 Blest as I am, and honour'd in your friendship,
 There is one pain that hangs about my heart.

Sci. What means my son !

Alt. When at your intercession,
 Last night, Calista yielded to my happiness,
 Just ere we parted, as I seal'd my vows
 With rapture on her lips, I found her cold,
 As a dead lover's statue on his tomb ;
 A rising storm of passion shook her breast,
 Her eyes a piteous show'r of tears let fall,

And then she sigh'd, as if her heart were breaking.
 With all the tend'rest eloquence of love
 I begg'd to be a sharer in her grief :
 But she, with looks averse, and eyes that froze me,
 Sadly reply'd, her sorrows were her own,
 Nor in a father's power to dispose of.

Sci. Away ! it is the cozenage of their sex ;
 One of the common arts they practise on us :
 To sigh and weep then when their hearts beat high
 With expectation of the coming joy.
 Thou hast in camps and fighting fields been bred,
 Unknowing in the subtleties of women ;
 The virgin bride, who swoons with deadly fear,
 To see the end of all her wishes near,
 When blushing from the light and public eyes,
 To the kind covert of the night she flies,
 With equal fires to meet the bridegroom moves,
 Melts in his arms, and with a loose she loves. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lothario and Rossano.

Loth. The father, and the husband !

Ross. Let them pass.
 They saw us not.

Loth. I care not if they did ;
 Ere long I mean to meet 'em face to face,
 And gall 'em with my triumph o'er Calista.

Ross. You lov'd her once.

Loth. I lik'd her, would have marry'd her,
 But that it pleas'd her father to refuse me,
 To make this honourable fool her husband :
 For which, if I forget him, may the shame
 I mean to brand his name with, stick on mine.

Ross. She, gentle soul, was kinder than her father.

Loth. She was, and oft in private gave me hearing ;
 Till, by long list'ning to the soothing tale,
 At length her easy heart was wholly mine.

Ross. I've heard you oft describe her, haughty, insolent,
 And fierce with high disdain : it moves my wonder,
 That virtue thus defended, should be yielded
 A prey to loose desires.

Loth. Hear then, I'll tell thee :
 Once in a lone and secret hour of night,

When

When ev'ry eye was clos'd, and the pale moon
And stars alone shone conscious of the theft,
Hot with the Tuscan grape, and high in blood,
Hap'ly I stole unheeded to her chamber.

Ross. That minute sure was lucky.

Loth. Oh, 'twas great!

I found the fond, believing, love-sick maid,
Loose, unattir'd, warm, tender, full of wishes;
Fierceness and pride, the guardians of her honour,
Were charm'd to rest, and love alone was waking.
Within her rising bosom all was calm,
As peaceful seas that know no storms, and only
Are gently lifted up and down by tides.
I snatch'd the glorious, golden opportunity,
And with prevailing, youthful ardor press'd her,
'Till with short sighs, and murmuring reluctance,
The yielding fair-one gave me perfect happiness.
Ev'n all the live-long night we pass'd in bliss,
In extasies too fierce to last for ever;
At length, the morn and cold indifference came;
When, fully sated with the luscious banquet,
I hastily took leave, and left the nymph
To think on what was past, and sigh alone.

Ross. You saw her soon again?

Loth. Too soon I saw her:

For, Oh! that meeting was not like the former:
I found my heart no more beat high with transport,
No more I sigh'd, and languish'd for enjoyment;
'Twas past, and reason took her turn to reign,
While ev'ry weakness fell before her throne.

Ross. What of the lady?

Loth. With uneasy fondness

She hung upon me, wept, and sigh'd, and swore
She was undone; talk'd of a priest, and marriage;
Of flying with me from her father's pow'r;
Call'd ev'ry faint and blessed angel down,
To witness for her that she was my wife.
I started at that name.

Ross. What answer made you?

Loth. None; but pretending sudden pain and illness,
Escap'd the persecution. Two nights since,
By message urg'd and frequent importunity,

Again I saw her. Straight with tears and sighs,
 With swelling breasts, with swooning, and distraction,
 With all the subtleties and powerful arts
 Of wilful woman lab'ring for her purpose,
 Again she told the same dull nauseous tale.
 Unmov'd, I begg'd her spare th'ungrateful subject,
 Since I resolv'd, that love and peace of mind
 Might flourish long inviolate betwixt us,
 Never to load it with the marriage chain :
 That I would still retain her in my heart,
 My ever gentle mistress and my friend ;
 But for those other names of wife and husband,
 They only meant ill-nature, cares, and quarrels.

Ross. How bore she this reply ?

Loth. ' Ev'n as the earth,
 ' When, winds pent up, or heating fires beneath
 ' Shaking the mass, she labours with destruction.'
 At first her rage was dumb, and wanted words ;
 But when the storm found way, 'twas wild and loud :
 Mad as the priestess of the Delphic god,
 Enthusiastic passion swell'd her breast,
 Enlarg'd her voice, and ruffled all her form.
 Proud, and disdainful of the love I proffer'd,
 She call'd me villain ! monster ! base betrayer !
 At last, in very bitterness of soul,
 With deadly imprecations on herself,
 She vow'd severely ne'er to see me more ;
 Then bid me fly that minute : I obey'd,
 And bowing, left her to grow cool at leisure.

Ross. She has relented since, else why this message,
 To meet the keeper of her secrets here
 This morning ?

Loth. See, the person whom you nam'd !

Enter Lucilla.

Well, my ambassadess, what must we treat of ?
 Come you to menace war and proud defiance,
 Or does the peaceful olive grace your message ?
 Is your fair mistress calmer ? Does she soften ?
 And must we love again ? Perhaps she means
 To treat in juncture with her new ally,
 And make her husband party to th' agreement.

Luc. Is this well done, my lord ? Have you put off

All sense of human nature ? Keep a little,
 A little pity, to distinguish manhood,
 Lest other men, tho' cruel, should disclaim you,
 And judge you to be number'd with the brutes:

Loth. I see thou'lt learnt to rail.

Luc. I've learnt to weep :

That lesson my sad mistress often gives me :
 By day she seeks some melancholy shade,
 To hide her sorrows from the prying world ;
 At night she watches all the long, long hours,
 And listens to the winds and beating rain,
 With sighs as loud, and tears that fall as fast.
 Then, ever and anon, she wrings her hands,
 And cries, false, false Lothario !

Loth. Oh, no more !

I swear thou'lt spoil thy pretty face with crying ;
 And thou hast beauty that may make thy fortune :
 Some keeping cardinal shall doat upon thee,
 And barter his church treasure for thy freshness.

Luc. What ! shall I sell my innocence and youth,
 For wealth or titles, to perfidious man !
 To man, who makes his mirth of our undoing !
 The base, profest betrayer of our sex !
 Let me grow old in all misfortunes else,
 Rather than know the sorrows of Calista !

Loth. Does she send thee to chide in her behalf ?
 I swear thou dost it with so good a grace,
 That I could almost love thee for thy frowning.

Luc. Read there, my lord, there, in her own sad
 lines, *[Giving a letter.]*
 Which best can tell the story of her woes,
 That grief of heart which your unkindness gives her.

[Lothario reads.]

*Your cruelty—Obedience to my father—give my hand to
 Altamont.*

By Heav'n, 'tis well ! such ever be the gifts
 With which I greet the man whom my soul hates. *[Aside.]*
 But to go on !

*——Wish——Heart——Honour——too faithless——
 Weakness——to-morrow——last trouble——lost Calista.*

Women, I see, can change as well as men.
 She writes me here, forsaken as I am,
 That I should bind my brows with mournful willow,

For she has giv'n her hand to Altamont :

Yet, tell the fair inconstant——

Luc. How, my lord !

Loth. Nay, no more angry words : say to Calista,
The humblest of her slaves shall wait her pleasure ;
If she can leave her happy husband's arms,
To think upon so lost a thing as I am.

Luc. Alas ! for pity, come with gentler looks :
Wound not her heart with this unmanly triumph ;
And tho' you love her not, yet swear you do,
So shall dissembling once be virtuous in you.

Loth. Ha ! who comes here ?

Luc. The bridegroom's friend, Horatio.
He must not see us here. To-morrow early
Be at the garden gate.

Loth. Bear to my love
My kindest thoughts, and swear I will not fail her.

*[Lothario putting up the letter hastily, drops it
as he goes out.]*

*[Exit Lothario and Rossano one way, Lucilla another.
Enter Horatio.]*

Hor. Sure 'tis the very error of my eyes ;
Waking I dream, or I beheld Lothario ;
He seem'd conferring with Calista's woman :
At my approach they started, and retir'd.
What business could he have here, and with her ?
I know he bears the noble Altamont
Profest and deadly hate—What paper's this ?

[Taking up the letter.]

Ha ! To Lothario !—'s death ! Calista's name !

[Opening it.]

Confusion and misfortunes !

[Reads.]

“ Your cruelty has at length determined me, and I
“ have resolv'd this morning to yield a perfect obedience
“ to my father, and to give my hand to Altamont, in
“ spite of my weakness for the false Lothario. I could
“ almost wish I had that heart and that honour to bestow
“ with it, which you have robb'd me of :

Damnation ! to the rest——

[Reads again.]

“ But, Oh ! I fear, could I retrieve 'em, I should again
“ be undone by the too faithless, yet too lovely Lotha-
“ rio. This is the last weakness of my pen, and to-
“ morrow

“morrow shall be the last in which I will indulge my
 “eyes. Lucilla shall conduct you, if you are kind.
 “enough to let me see you; it shall be the last trouble
 “you shall meet with from

“The lost Calista.”

The lost, indeed! for thou art gone as far
 As there can be perdition. Fire and sulphur!
 Hell is the sole avenger of such crimes.
 Oh, that the ruin were but all thy own!
 Thou wilt ev’n make thy father curse his age:
 At sight of this black scroll, the gentle Altamont
 (For, Oh! I know his heart is set upon thee)
 Shall droop, and hang his discontented head,
 Like merit scorn’d by insolent authority,
 And never grace the public with his virtues.—
 ‘Perhaps ev’n now he gazes fondly on her,
 ‘And, thinking soul and body both alike,
 ‘Blesses the perfect workmanship of Heav’n;
 ‘Then sighing, to his ev’ry care speaks peace,
 ‘And bids his heart be satisfy’d with happiness.
 ‘Oh, wretched husband! while she hangs about thee
 ‘With idle blandishments, and plays the fond one,
 ‘Ev’n then her hot imagination wanders,
 ‘Contriving riot, and loose ’scapes of love;
 ‘And while she clasps thee close, makes thee a monster.
 What if I give this paper to her father?
 It follows that his justice dooms her dead,
 And breaks his heart with sorrow; hard return
 For all the good his hand has heap’d on us!
 Hold, let me take a moment’s thought——

Enter Lavinia.

Lav. My lord!
 Trust me, it joys my heart that I have found you.
 Enquiring wherefore you had left the company,
 Before my brother’s nuptial rites were ended,
 They told me you had felt some sudden illness.
 Where are you sick? Is it your head? your heart?
 Tell me, my love, and ease my anxious thoughts,
 That I may take you gently in my arms,
 Sooth you to rest, and soften all your pains.

Hor. It were unjust – No, let me spare my friend,
Lock up the fatal secret in my breast,
Nor tell him that which will undo his quiet.

Lav. What means my lord?

Hor. Ha! saidst thou, my Lavinia?

Lav. Alas! you know not what you make me suffer.
Why are you pale? Why did you start and tremble?
Whence is that sigh? And wherefore are your eyes
Severely rais'd to Heav'n? The sick man thus,
Acknowledging the summons of his fate,
Lifts up his feeble hands and eyes for mercy,
And with confusion thinks upon his exit.

Hor. Oh, no! thou hast mistook my sickness quite;
These pangs are of the soul. Wou'd I had met
Sharpest convulsions, spotted pestilence,
Or any other deadly foe to life,
Rather than heave beneath this load of thought!

Lav. Alas! what is it? 'Wherefore turn you from
' Why did you falsely call me your Lavinia, [me?
' And swear I was Horatio's better half,
' Since now you mourn unkindly by yourself,
' And rob me of my partnership of sadness?
' Witness, ye holy pow'rs, who know my truth,
' There cannot be a chance in life so miserable,
' Nothing so very hard but I could bear it,
' Much rather than my love should treat me coldly,
' And use me like a stranger to his heart.'

Hor. Seek not to know what I would hide from all,
But most from thee. I never knew a pleasure,
Ought that was joyful, fortunate, or good,
But strait I ran to bless thee with the tidings,
And laid up all my happiness with thee:
But wherefore, wherefore shou'd I give thee pain?
Then spare me, I conjure thee; ask no further;
Allow my melancholy thoughts this privilege,
And let 'em brood in secret o'er their sorrows.

Lav. It is enough; chide not, and all is well!
Forgive me if I saw you sad, Horatio,
And ask'd to weep out part of your misfortunes:
I wo't not press to know what you forbid me.
Yet, my lov'd lord, yet you must grant me this,
Forget your cares for this one happy day,

Devote this day to mirth, and to your Altamont ;
For his dear sake let peace be in your looks.
Ev'n now the jocund bridegroom waits your wishes,
He thinks the priest has but half bless'd his marriage,
'Till his friend hails him with the sound of joy.

Hor. Oh, never, never, never ! Thou art innocent :
Simplicity from ill, pure native truth,
And candour of the mind, adorn thee ever ;
But there are such, such false ones, in the world,
'Twould fill thy gentle soul with wild amazement
To hear their story told.

Lav. False ones, my lord !

Hor. Fatally fair they are, and in their smiles
The graces, little loves, and young desires inhabit ;
But all that gaze upon 'em are undone ;
For they are false, luxurious in their appetites,
And all the Heav'n they hope for is variety :
One lover to another still succeeds,
Another, and another after that,
And the last fool is welcome as the former ;
'Till, having lov'd his hour out, he gives place,
And mingles with the herd that went before him.

Lav. Can there be such, and have they peace of mind ?
Have they, in all the series of their changing,
One happy hour ? If women are such things,
How was I form'd so different from my sex !
My little heart is satisfy'd with you ;
You take up all her room, as in a cottage
Which harbours some benighted princely stranger,
Where the good man, proud of his hospitality,
Yields all his homely dwelling to his guest,
And hardly keeps a corner for himself.

Hor. Oh, were they all like thee, men would adore 'em,
And all the business of their lives be loving ;
The nuptial band should be the pledge of peace,
And all domestic cares and quarrels cease ;
The world shou'd learn to love by virtuous rules,
And marriage be no more the jest of fools. [*Exeunt.*

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

SCENE, a Hall.

Enter Calista and Lucilla.

CALISTA.

BE dumb for ever, silent as the grave,
 Nor let thy fond officious love disturb
 My solemn sadness with the sound of joy.
 If thou wilt soothe me, tell some dismal tale
 Of pining discontent, and black despair;
 For, Oh! I've gone around thro' all my thoughts,
 But all are indignation, love, or shame,
 And my dear peace of mind is lost for ever.

Luc. Why do you follow still that wand'ring fire,
 That has misled your weary steps, and leaves you
 Benighted in a wilderness of woe,
 That false Lothario? Turn from the deceiver;
 Turn, and behold where gentle Altamont,
 ' Kind as the softest virgin of our sex,
 ' And faithful as the simple village-swain,
 ' That never knew the courtly vice of changing,'
 Sighs at your feet, and woos you to be happy.

Cal. Away! I think not of him. My sad soul
 Has form'd a dismal melancholy scene,
 Such a retreat as I wou'd wish to find;
 An unfrequented vale, o'ergrown with trees
 Mossy and old, within whose lonesome shade
 Ravens, and birds ill-omen'd, only dwell:
 No sound to break the silence, but a brook
 That bubbling winds among the weeds: no mark
 Of any human shape that had been there,
 Unless a skeleton of some poor wretch,
 Who had long since, like me, by love undone,
 Sought that sad place out, to despair and die in.

Luc. Alas, for pity!

Cal. There I fain would hide me
 From the base world, from malice and from shame;
 For 'tis the solemn counsel of my soul
 Never to live with public loss of honour:
 'Tis fix'd to die, rather than bear the insolence

Of each affected she that tells my story,
 And blesses her good stars that she is virtuous.
 To be a tale for fools ! Scorn'd by the women,
 And pity'd by the men ! Oh, insupportable !

Luc. Can you perceive the manifest destruction,
 The gaping gulph that opens just before you,
 And yet rush on, tho' conscious of the danger ?
 Oh, hear me ; hear your ever-faithful creature !
 By all the good I wish, by all the ill
 My trembling heart forebodes, let me intreat you,
 Never to see this faithless man again ;
 Let me forbid his coming.

Cal. On thy life
 I charge thee no : my genius drives me on ;
 I must, I will behold him once again :
 Perhaps it is the crisis of my fate,
 And this one interview shall end my cares.
 My lab'ring heart that swells with indignation,
 Heaves to discharge the burthen ; that once done,
 The busy thing shall rest within its cell,
 And never beat again.

Luc. Trust not to that :
 Rage is the shortest passion of our souls :
 Like narrow brooks that rise with sudden show'rs,
 It swells in haste, and falls again as soon ;
 Still as it ebbs the softer thoughts flow in,
 And the deceiver Love supplies its place.

Cal. I have been wrong'd enough to arm my temper
 Against the smooth delusion ; but alas !
 (Chide not my weakness, gentle maid, but pity me)
 A woman's softness hangs about me still :
 Then let me blush, and tell thee all my folly.
 I swear I could not see the dear betrayer
 Kneel at my feet, and sigh to be forgiven,
 But my relenting heart would pardon all,
 And quite forget 'twas he that had undone me.

Luc. Ye sacred powers, whose gracious providence
 ' Is watchful for our good, guard me from men,
 ' From their deceitful tongues, their vows, and flatteries ;
 ' Still let me pass neglected by their eyes,
 ' Let my bloom wither, and my form decay,

' That

‘ That none may think it worth his while to ruin me,
 ‘ And fatal love may never be my bane.’ [Exit.

Cal. Ha, Altamont ! Calista, now be wary,
 And guard thy soul’s accesses with dissembling :
 Nor let this hostile husband’s eyes explore
 The warring passions, and tumultuous thoughts,
 That rage within thee, and deform thy reason.

Enter Altamont.

Alt. Begone, my cares, I give you to the winds,
 Far to be borne, far from the happy Altamont ;
 ‘ Far from this sacred æra of my love,
 ‘ A better order of succeeding days
 ‘ Comes smiling forward, white and lucky all.’
 Calista is the mistress of the year ;
 She crowns the seasons with auspicious beauty,
 And bids ev’n all my hours be good and joyful.

Cal. If I were ever mistress of such happiness,
 Oh ! wherefore did I play th’ unthrifty fool,
 And wasting all on others, leave myself
 Without one thought of joy to give me comfort ?

Alt. Oh, mighty love ! Shall that fair face profane
 This thy great festival with frowns and sadness !
 I swear it sha’ not be, for I will wooe thee
 With sighs so moving, with so warm a transport,
 That thou shalt catch the gentle flame from me,
 And kindle into joy.

Cal. I tell thee, Altamont,
 Such hearts as ours were never pair’d above :
 Ill-suited to each other ; join’d, not match’d ;
 Some fullen influence, a foe to both,
 Has wrought this fatal marriage to undo us.
 Mark but the frame and temper of our minds,
 How very much we differ. Ev’n this day,
 That fills thee with such extasy and transport,
 To me brings nothing that should make me bless it,
 Or think it better than the day before,
 Or any other in the course of time,
 That duly took its turn, and was forgotten.

Alt. If to behold thee as my pledge of happiness,
 To know none fair, none excellent but thee ;
 If still to love thee with unwearied constancy,
 ‘ Through ev’ry season, ev’ry change of life,

‘ Through

' Through wrinkled age, through sickness and misfortune,
Be worth the least return of grateful love,
Oh, then let my Calista bless this day,
And set it down for happy.

Cal. 'Tis the day

In which my father gave my hand to Altamont ;
As such, I will remember it for ever.

Enter Sciolto, Horatio, and Lavinia.

Sci. Let mirth go on, let pleasure know no pause,
But fill up ev'ry minute of this day.

'Tis yours, my children, sacred to your loves ;
The glorious sun himself for you looks gay :
He shines for Altamont and for Calista.

Let there be music ; let the master touch
The sprightly string, and softly-breathing flute,
'Till harmony rouse ev'ry gentle passion,
Teach the cold maid to lose her fears in love,
And the fierce youth to languish at her feet.

Begin : ev'n age itself is chear'd with music ;
It wakes a glad remembrance of our youth,
Calls back past joys, and warms us into transport.

[*Music.*

' SONG by Mr. CONGREVE.

I.

' Ah, stay ! ah, turn ! ah, whither would you fly,
' Too charming, too relentless maid ?
' I follow not to conquer, but to die ;
' You of the fearful are afraid.

II.

' In vain I call ; for she, like fleeting air,
' When press'd by some tempestuous wind,
' Flies swifter from the voice of my despair,
' Nor casts one pitying look behind.

Sci. Take care my gates be open, bid all welcome ;
All who rejoice with me to-day are friends :
Let each indulge his genius, each be glad,
Jocund and free, and swell the feast with mirth ;

The

14 THE FAIR PENITENT.

The sprightly bowl shall chearfully go round,
 None shall be grave, nor too severely wise ;
 Losses and disappointments, cares and poverty,
 The rich man's insolence, and great man's scorn,
 In wine shall be forgotten all. To-morrow
 Will be too soon to think, and to be wretched.
 Oh, grant, ye pow'rs, that I may see these happy,
[Pointing to Alt. and Cal.]
 Compleatly blest, and I have life enough ;
 And leave the rest indifferently to fate. [Exeunt.]

Hor. What if, while all are here intent on revelling,
 I privately went forth, and sought Lothario?
 This letter may be forg'd ; perhaps the wantonness
 Of his vain youth, to stain a lady's fame ;
 Perhaps his malice to disturb my friend.
 Oh, no ! my heart forebodes it must be true.
 Methought, ev'n now, I mark'd the starts of guilt
 That shook her soul ; tho' damn'd dissimulation
 Screen'd her dark thoughts, and set to public view
 A specious face of innocence and beauty.
 ' Oh, false appearance ! What is all our sovereignty,
 ' Our boasted pow'r ? When they oppose their arts,
 ' Still they prevail, and we are found their fools.'
 With such smooth looks, and many a gentle word,
 The first fair she beguil'd her easy lord ;
 Too blind with love and beauty to beware,
 He fell unthinking in the fatal snare ;
 Nor could believe that such a heav'nly face
 Had bargain'd with the devil to damn her wretched race,
[Exit.]

SCENE, *the Street near Sciolto's Palace.*

Enter Lothario and Rossano.

Loth. To tell thee then the purport of my thoughts ;
 The loss of this fond paper would not give me
 A moment of disquiet, were it not
 My instrument of vengeance on this Altamont ;
 Therefore I mean to wait some opportunity
 Of speaking with the maid we saw this morning.

Ross. I wish you, Sir, to think upon the danger
 Of being seen ; to-day their friends are round 'em ;

And

And any eye that lights by chance on you,
Shall put your life and safety to the hazard.

[They confer aside.]

Enter Horatio.

Hor. Still I must doubt some mystery of mischief,
Some artifice beneath. Lothario's father!
I know him well; he was sagacious, cunning,
Fluent in words, and bold in peaceful counsels,
But of a cold, unactive hand in war:
Yet, with these coward's virtues, he undid
My unsuspecting, valiant, honest friend.
This son, if fame mistakes not, is more hot,
More open and unartful—Ha! he's here! *[Seeing him.]*

Loth. Damnation! He again!—This second time
To-day he has cross'd me, like my evil genius.

Hor. I fought you, Sir.

Loth. 'Tis well then I am found.

Hor. 'Tis well you are. The man who wrongs my
friend

To the earth's utmost verge I would pursue.
No place, tho' e'er so holy, should protect him;
No shape that artful fear e'er form'd should hide him,
'Till he fair answer made, and did me justice.

Loth. Ha! dost thou know me? that I am Lothario?
As great a name as this proud city boasts of.
Who is this mighty man, then, this Horatio,
That I should basely hide me from his anger,
Lest he should chide me for his friend's displeasure?

Hor. The brave, 'tis true, do never shun the light;
Just are their thoughts, and open are their tempers,
Freely without disguise they love and hate,
Still are they found in the fair face of day,
And Heav'n and men are judges of their actions.

Loth. Such let 'em be of mine: there's not a purpose
Which my soul e'er fram'd, or my hand acted,
But I could well have bid the world look on,
And what I once durst do, have dar'd to justify.

Hor. Where was this open boldness, this free spirit,
When but this very morning I surpriz'd thee,
In base, dishonest privacy, consulting
And bribing a poor mercenary wretch,
To sell her lady's secrets, stain her honour,

26 THE FAIR PENITENT.

And, with a forg'd contrivance, blast her virtue?—
At sight of me thou fled'st.

Loth. Ha! fled from thee!

Hor. Thou fled'st, and guilt was on thee, like a thief,
A pilferer, descry'd in some dark corner,
Who there had lodg'd, with mischievous intent,
To rob and ravage at the hour of rest,
And do a midnight murder on the sleepers.

Loth. Slave! villain!

[Offers to draw, Rossano holds him.]

Ross. Hold, my lord! think where you are;
Think how unsafe and hurtful to your honour
It were to urge a quarrel in this place,
And shock the peaceful city with a broil.

Loth. Then, since thou dost provoke my vengeance,
I would not, for this city's wealth, for all [know
Which the sea wafts to our Ligurian shore,
But that the joys I reap'd with that fond wanton,
The wife of Altamont, should be as public
As is the noon-day sun, air, earth, or water,
Or any common benefit of nature.
Think'st thou I meant the shame should be conceal'd?
Oh, no! by hell and vengeance, all I wanted
Was some fit messenger to bear the news
To the dull doating husband: now I have found him,
And thou art he.

Hor. I hold thee base enough
To break through law, and spurn at sacred order,
And do a brutal injury like this.
Yet mark me well, young lord, I think Calista
Too nice, too noble, and too great of soul,
To be the prey of such a thing as thou art.
'Twas base and poor, unworthy of a man,
To forge a scroll so villainous and loose,
And mark it with a noble lady's name:
These are the mean, dishonest arts of cowards,
Strangers to manhood, and to glorious dangers;
Who, bred at home in idleness and riot,
Rantack for mistresses th' unwholesome stews,
And never know the worth of virtuous love.

Loth.

Loth. Think'st thou I forg'd the letter ? Think so still,
'Till the broad shame come staring in thy face,
And boys shall hoot the cuckold as he passes.

Hor. Away ! no woman could descend so low :
A skipping, dancing, worthless tribe you are ;
Fit only for yourselves, you herd together ;
And when the circling glass warms your vain hearts,
You talk of beauties that you never saw,
And fancy raptures that you never knew.

' Legends of saints, who never yet had being,
' Or being, ne'er were saints, are not so false
' As the fond tales which you recount of love.'

Loth. But that I do not hold it worth my leisure,
I could produce such damning proof——

Hor. 'Tis false !
You blast the fair with lies because they scorn you,
Hate you like age, like ugliness and impotence :
Rather than make you blest, they would die virgins,
And stop the propagation of mankind.

Loth. It is the curse of fools to be secure,
And that be thine and Altamont's. Dream on ;
Nor think upon my vengeance till thou feel'st it.

Hor. Hold, Sir ; another word, and then farewell.
Tho' I think greatly of Calista's virtue,
And hold it far beyond thy power to hurt ;
Yet, as she shares the honour of my Altamont,
That treasure of a foldier, bought with blood,
And kept at life's expence, I must not have
(Mark me, young Sir) her very name profan'd.
Learn to restrain the licence of your speech ;
'Tis held you are too slavish. When you are met
Among your set of fools, talk of your drefs,
Of dice, of whores, of horses, and yourselves ;
'Tis safer, and becomes your understandings.

Loth. What if we pass beyond this solemn order,
And, in defiance of the stern Horatio,
Indulge our gayer thoughts, let laughter loose,
And use his sacred friendship for our mirth ?

Hor. 'Tis well, Sir, you are pleasant——

Loth. By the joys
Which my soul yet has uncontroul'd pursu'd,
I would not turn aside from my least pleasure,

Tho' all thy force were arm'd to bar my way :
 But like the birds, great Nature's happy commoners,
 That haunt in woods, in meads, and flow'ry gardens,
 Rife the sweets and taste the choicest fruits,
 Yet scorn to ask the lordly owner's leave.

Hor. What liberty has vain presumptuous youth,
 That thou shouldst dare provoke me unchastis'd ?
 But henceforth, boy, I warn thee, shun my walks.
 If in the bounds of yon forbidden place
 Again thou'rt found, expect a punishment,
 Such as great souls, impatient of an injury,
 Exact from those who wrong 'em much, ev'n death ;
 Or something worse ; an injur'd husband's vengeance
 Shall print a thousand wounds, tear thy fair form,
 And scatter thee to all the winds of Heav'n.

Loth. Is then my way in Genoa prescrib'd
 By a dependent on the wretched Altamont,
 A talking Sir, that brawls for him in taverns,
 And vouches for his valour's reputation ?

Hor. Away ! thy speech is fouler than thy manners,

Loth. Or, if there be a name more vile, his parasite ;
 A beggar's parasite !

Hor. Now learn humanity,

[*Offers to strike him, Rossano interposes.*

Since brutes and boys are only taught with blows.

Loth. Damnation !

[*They draw.*

Ross. Hold, this goes no further here.

Horatio, 'tis too much ; already see
 The crowd are gath'ring to us.

Loth. Oh, Rossano !

Or give me way, or thou'rt no more my friend.

Ross. Sciolto's servants too have ta'en th' alarm ;
 You'll be oppress'd by numbers. Be advis'd,
 Or I must force you hence. Take't on my word,
 You shall have justice done you on Horatio.
 Put up, my lord.

Loth. This wo'not brook delay ;
 West of the town a mile, among the rocks,
 Two hours ere noon to-morrow, I expect thee,
 Thy single hand to mine.

Hor. I'll met thee there.

Loth.

Loth. To-morrow, Oh, my better stars! to-morrow
Exert your influence; shine strongly for me;
'Tis not a common conquest I would gain,
Since love, as well as arms, must grace my triumph.

[*Exeunt Lothario and Rossano.*]

Hor. Two hours ere noon to-morrow! Ha! ere that
He sees Calista! Oh, unthinking fool——
What if I urg'd her with the crime and danger?
If any spark from Heav'n remain unquench'd
Within her breast, my breath perhaps may wake it.
Cou'd I but prosper there, I wou'd not doubt
My combat with that loud vain-glorious boaster.
Were you, ye fair, but cautious whom you trust,
Did you but think how seldom fools are just,
So many of your sex would not in vain
Of broken vows, and faithless men, complain:
Of all the various wretches love has made,
How few have been by men of sense betray'd?
Convinc'd by reason, they your pow'r confess,
Pleas'd to be happy, as you're pleas'd to bless,
And, conscious of your worth, can never love you less. }

[*Exit.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *an Apartment in Sciolto's Palace.*

Enter Sciolto and Calista.

SCIOLTO.

NOW, by my life, my honour, 'tis too much!
Have not I mark'd thee, wayward as thou art,
Perverse and fullen all this day of joy?
When ev'ry heart was cheer'd, and mirth went round,
Sorrow, displeasure, and repining anguish,
Sat on thy brow; 'like some malignant planet,
' Foe to the harvest, and the healthy year,
' Who scouls adverse, and lours upon the world,
' When all the other stars, with gentle aspect,
' Propitious shine, and meaning good to man.'

Cal. Is then the task of duty half perform'd ?
Has not your daughter given herself to Altamont,
Yielded the native freedom of her will
To an imperious husband's lordly rule,
To gratify a father's stern command ?

Sci. Dost thou complain ?

Cal. For pity do not frown then,
If in despite of all my vow'd obedience,
A sigh breaks out, or a tear fall by chance :
For, Oh ! that sorrow which has drawn your anger,
Is the sad native of Calista's breast,
' And once possess'd, will never quit its dwelling,
' Till life, the prop of all, shall leave the building,
' To tumble down, and moulder into ruin.'

Sci. Now by the sacred dust of that dear saint
That was thy mother ; ' by her wond'rous goodness,
' Her soft, her tender, most complying sweetness,'
I swear some sullen thought that shuns the light,
Lurks underneath that sadness in thy visage.
But mark me well, tho' by yon heaven I love thee
As much, I think, as a fond parent can ;
Yet shouldst thou (which the powers above forbid)
E'er stain the honour of thy name with infamy,
I'll cast thee off, as one whose impious hands
Has rent asunder nature's nearest ties,
Which once divided, never join again.
To-day I've made a noble youth thy husband ;
Consider well his worth ; reward his love ;
Be willing to be happy, and thou art so. [*Ex. Sciolto.*]

Cal. How hard is the condition of our sex,
Thro' ev'ry state of life the slaves of man !
In all the dear delightful days of youth
A rigid father dictates to our wills,
And deals out pleasure with a scanty hand.
To his, the tyrant husband's reign succeeds ;
Proud with opinion of superior reason,
He holds domestic bus'ness and devotion
All we are capable to know, and shuts us,
Like cloister'd ideots, from the world's acquaintance,
And all the joys of freedom. Wherefore are we
Born with high souls, but to assert ourselves,

Shake

Shake off this vile obedience they exact,
And claim an equal empire o'er the world?

Enter Horatio.

Hor. She's here! yet, Oh! my tongue is at a loss.
Teach me, some pow'r, that happy art of speech,
To dress my purpose up in gracious words;
Such as may softly steal upon her soul,
And never waken the tempestuous passions.
By Heav'n, she weeps!—Forgive me, fair Calista,
If I presume on privilege of friendship,
To join my grief to yours, and mourn the evils
That hurt your peace, and quench those eyes in tears.

Cal. To steal, unlook'd for, on my private sorrow,
Speaks not the man of honour, nor the friend,
But rather means the spy.

Hor. Unkindly said!
For, Oh! as sure as you accuse me falsely,
I come to prove myself Calista's friend. [tamont!

Cal. You are my husband's friend, the friend of Al-

Hor. Are you not one? Are you not join'd by Heav'n,
Each interwoven with the other's fate?
Are you not mix'd like streams of meeting rivers,
Whose blended waters are no more distinguish'd,
But roll into the sea, one common flood?
Then who can give his friendship but to one?
Who can be Altamont's and not Calista's?

Cal. Force, and the wills of our imperious rulers,
May bind two bodies in one wretched chain;
But minds will still look back to their own choice.
' So the poor captive in a foreign realm,
' Stands on the shore, and sends his wishes back
' To the dear native land from whence he came.

Hor. When souls that should agree to will the same,
To have one common object for their wishes,
Look different ways, regardless of each other,
Think what a train of wretchedness ensues:
Love shall be banish'd from the genial bed,
The night shall all be lonely and unquiet,
And ev'ry day shall be a day of cares.

Cal. Then all the boasted office of thy friendship,
Was but to tell Calista what a wretch she is.
Alas! what needeth that?

Hor.

Hor. Oh ! rather say,
I came to tell her how she might be happy ;
To sooth the secret anguish of her soul ;
To comfort that fair mourner, that forlorn one,
And teach her steps to know the paths of peace.

Cal. Say thou, to whom this Paradise is known,
Where lies the blissful region ; mark my way to it ;
For, Oh ! 'tis sure, I long to be at rest.

Hor. Then—to be good is to be happy—Angels
Are happier than mankind, because they're better.
Guilt is the source of sorrow ; 'tis the fiend,
Th' avenging fiend, that follows us behind
With whips and stings. The blest know none of this,
But rest in everlasting peace of mind,
And find the height of all their Heav'n is goodness.

Cal. And what bold parasite's officious tongue
Shall dare to tax Calista's name with guilt ?

Hor. None should ; but 'tis a busy, talking world,
That with licentious breath blows like the wind,
As freely on the palace as the cottage.

Cal. What mystic riddle lurks beneath thy words,
Which thou wouldst seem unwilling to express,
As if it meant dishonour to my virtue ?
Away with this ambiguous shuffling phrase,
And let thy oracle be understood.

Hor. Lothario !

Cal. Ha ! what wouldst thou mean by him ?

Hor. Lothario and Calista !—Thus they join
Two names, which Heav'n decreed should never meet.
Hence have the talkers of this populous city
A shameful tale to tell, for public sport,
Of an unhappy beauty, a false fair one,
Who plighted to a noble youth her faith,
When she had giv'n her honour to a wretch.

Cal. Death and confusion ! Have I liv'd to this ?
Thus to be treated with unmanly insolence !
To be the sport of a loose ruffian's tongue !
Thus to be us'd ! thus ! like the vilest creature,
That ever was a slave to vice and infamy.

Hor. By honour and fair truth you wrong me much ;
For, on my soul, nothing but strong necessity
Could urge my tongue to this ungrateful office.

I came

THE FAIR PENITENT.

I came with strong reluctance, as if death
Had stood across my way, to save your honour,
Yours and Sciolto's, yours and Altamont's;
Like one who ventures through a burning pile,
To save his tender wife, with all her brood
Of little fondlings, from the dreadful ruin.

Cal. Is this the famous friend of Altamont,
For noble worth, and deeds of arms renown'd?
Is this the tale-bearing, officious fellow,
That watches for intelligence from eyes;
This wretched Argus of a jealous husband,
That fills his easy ears with monstrous tales,
And makes him toss, and rave, and wreak at length
Bloody revenge on his defenceless wife,
Who guiltless dies, because her fool ran mad?

Hor. Alas! this rage is vain; for if your fame
Or peace be worth your care, you must be calm,
And listen to the means are left to save 'em.
'Tis now the lucky minute of your fate.

By me your genius speaks, by me it warns you,
Never to see that curs'd Lothario more;
Unless you mean to be despis'd, be shunn'd
By all our virtuous maids and noble matrons;
Unless you have devoted this rare beauty
To infamy, diseases, prostitution——

Cal. Dishonour blast thee, base, unmanner'd slave!
That dar'st forget my birth, and sacred sex,
And shock me with the rude, unballow'd sound!

Hor. Here kneel, and in the awful face of Heav'n
Breathe out a solemn vow, never to see,
Nor think, if possible, on him that ruin'd thee;
Or, by my Altamont's dear life, I swear,
This paper; nay, you must not fly—This paper,

[Holding her.]

This guilty paper shall divulge your shame—— [vance

Cal. What mean'st thou by that paper? What contri-
Hast thou been forging to deceive my father;
To turn his heart against his wretched daughter,
That Altamont and thou may share his wealth?
A wrong like this will make me ev'n forget
The weakness of my sex.—Oh, for a sword,

To

To urge my vengeance on the villain's hand
That forg'd the scroll!

Hor. Behold! Can this be forg'd?
See where Calista's name—— [*Shewing the letter near.*

Cal. To atoms thus, [*Tearing it.*
Thus let me tear the vile, detested falshood,
The wicked, lying evidence of shame.

Hor. Confusion!

Cal. Henceforth, thou officious fool,
Meddle no more; nor dare, ev'n on thy life,
To breathe an accent that may touch my virtue.
I am myself the guardian of my honour,
And will not bear so insolent a monitor.

Enter Altamont.

Alt. Where is my life, my love, my charming bride,
Joy of my heart, and pleasure of my eyes,
'The wish, and care, and business of my youth?
'Oh, let me find her, snatch her to my breast,
'And tell her she delays my bliss too long,
'Till my soft soul ev'n sickens with desire.'
Disorder'd!—and in tears!—Horatio too!
My friend is in amaze—What can it mean!
Tell me, Calista, who has done thee wrong,
That my swift sword may find out the offender,
And do thee ample justice.

Cal. Turn to him.

Alt. Horatio!

Cal. To that insolent.

Alt. My friend!

Could he do this? He, who was half myself?
'One faith has ever bound us, and one reason
'Guided our wills. Have I not found him just,
'Honest as truth itself? And' could he break
The sanctity of friendship? Could he wound
The heart of Altamont in his Calista?

Cal. I thought what justice I should find from thee!
Go fawn upon him, listen to his tale,
Applaud his malice, that would blast my fame,
And treat me like a common prostitute.
Thou art perhaps confederate in his mischief,
And wilt believe the legend, if he tells it.

Alt. Oh, impious! what presumptuous wretch shall dare
To

To offer at an injury like that?
 Priesthood, nor age, nor cowardice itself,
 Shall save him from the fury of my vengeance.

Cal. The man who dar'd to do it was Horatio;
 Thy darling friend; 'twas Altamont's Horatio.
 But mark me well; while thy divided heart,
 Doats on a villain that has wrong'd me thus,
 No force shall drag me to thy hated bed.
 Nor can my cruel father's pow'r do more
 Than shut me in a cloister: there, well pleas'd,
 Religious hardships will I learn to bear,
 To fast and freeze at midnight hours of pray'r:
 Nor think it hard, within a lonely cell,
 With melancholy, speechless saints to dwell;
 But bless the day I to that refuge ran,
 Free from the marriage chain, and from that tyrant, man.
 [*Exit Calista.*]

Alt. She's gone; and as she went, ten thousand fires
 Shot from her angry eyes: as if she meant
 Too well to keep the cruel vow she made.
 Now, as thou art a man, Horatio, tell me,
 What means this wild confusion in thy looks;
 As if thou wert at variance with thyself,
 Madness and reason combating within thee,
 And thou wert doubtful which shou'd get the better?

Hor. I wou'd be dumb for ever; but thy fate
 Has otherwise decreed it. Thou hast seen
 That idol of thy soul, the fair Calista;
 Thou hast beheld her tears.

Alt. I have seen her weep;
 I have seen that lovely one, that dear Calista,
 Complaining in the bitterness of sorrow,
 That thou, my friend, Horatio, thou hast wrong'd her.

Hor. That I have wrong'd her! Had her eyes been fed
 From that rich stream which warms her heart, and
 number'd

For ev'ry falling tear a drop of blood,
 It had not been too much; for she has ruin'd thee,
 Ev'n thee, my Altamont. She has undone thee.

Alt. Dost thou join ruin with Calista's name?
 What is so fair, so exquisitely good?
 Is she not more than painting can express,

Or youthful poets fancy when they love?

‘ Does she not come, like wisdom, or good fortune,
 ‘ Replete with blessings, giving wealth and honour?
 ‘ The dowry which she brings is peace and pleasure,
 ‘ And everlasting joys are in her arms.’

Hor. It had been better thou hadst liv’d a beggar,
 And fed on scraps at great men’s surly doors,
 Than to have match’d with one so false, so fatal.—

Alt. It is too much for friendship to allow thee.
 Because I tamely bore the wrong thou didst her,
 Thou dost avow the barb’rous, brutal part,
 And urge the injury ev’n to my face.

Hor. I see she has got possession of thy heart,
 She has charm’d thee, like a syren, to her bed,
 With looks of love, and with enchanting sounds:
 Too late the rocks and quicksands will appear,
 When thou art wreck’d upon the faithless shore,
 Then vainly wish thou hadst not left thy friend,
 To follow her delusion.

Alt. If thy friendship
 Does churlishly deny my love a room,
 It is not worth my keeping; I disclaim it.

Hor. Canst thou so soon forget what I’ve been to thee?
 I shar’d the task of nature with thy father,
 And form’d with care thy unexperienc’d youth
 To virtue and to arms.
 Thy noble father, Oh, thou light young man!
 Wou’d he have us’d me thus? One fortune fed us;
 For his was ever mine, mine his, and both
 Together flourish’d, and together fell.
 He call’d me friend, like thee: wou’d he have left me
 Thus, for a woman, and a vile one, too?

Alt. Thou can’st not, dar’st not mean it! Speak again,
 Say, who is vile; but dare not name Calista.

Hor. I had not spoke at first, unless compell’d,
 And forc’d to clear myself; but since thus urg’d,
 I must avow I do not know a viler.

Alt. Thou wert my father’s friend; he lov’d thee well;
 ‘ A venerable mark of him [geance.’
 ‘ Hangs round thee, and protects thee from my ven-
 I cannot, dare not lift my sword against thee,
 But henceforth never let me see thee more, [Going out.
Hor.

Hor. I love thee still, ungrateful as thou art,
And must and will preserve thee from dishonour,
Ev'n in despite of thee. [*Holds him.*]

Alt. Let go my arm.

Hor. If honour be thy care, if thou wouldst live
Without the name of credulous, wittol husband,
Avoid thy bride, shun her detested bed,
The joys it yields are dash'd with poison——

Alt. Off!

To urge me but a minute more is fatal.

Hor. She is polluted, stain'd——

Alt. Madness and raging!

But hence——

Hor. Dishonour'd by the man you hate——

Alt. I pr'ythee loose me yet, for thy own sake,
If life be worth thy keeping——

Hor. By Lothario.

Alt. Perdition take thee, villain, for the falshood!

[*Strikes him.*]

Now, nothing but thy life can make atonement.

Hor. A blow! Thou hast us'd me well—— [*Draws.*]

Alt. This to thy heart——

Hor. Yet hold—By Heav'n, his father's in his face!
Spite of my wrongs, my heart runs o'er with tenderness,
And I cou'd rather die myself than hurt him.

Alt. Defend thyself; for by my much-wrong'd love,
I swear, the poor evasion shall not save thee.

Hor. Yet hold—'thou know'st I dare—Think how
we've liv'd——

[*They fight; Altamont presses on Horatio, who retires.*
'Nay then, 'tis brutal violence; and thus,
'Thus nature bids me guard the life she gave.

[*They fight.*]

Lavinia enters, and runs between their swords.

Lav. My brother, my Horatio! Is it possible?
Oh, turn your cruel swords upon Lavinia.

If you must quench your impious rage in blood,
Behold, my heart shall give you all her store,

To save those dearer streams that flow from yours. [*this,*]

Alt. 'Tis well thou hast found a safe-guard; none but
No pow'r on earth, could save thee from my fury.

'*Lav.* O fatal, deadly sound!'

D

Hor.

38 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Hor. Safety from thee!

Away, vain boy! Hast thou forgot the rev'rence
Due to my arm, thy first, thy great example,
Which pointed out thy way to noble daring,
And shew'd thee what it was to be a man?

Lav. What busy, meddling fiend, what foe to goodness,

Could kindle such a discord? 'Oh, lay by
' Those most ungentle looks, and angry weapons,
' Unless you mean my griefs and killing fears
' Should stretch me out at your relentless feet,
' A wretched corse, the victim of your fury.'

Hor. Ask'st thou what made us foes? 'Twas base ingratitude,

'Twas such a sin to friendship, as Heav'n's mercy,
That strives with man's untoward, monstrous wickedness,
Unwearied with forgiving, scarce could pardon.
He who was all to me, child, brother, friend,
With barb'rous, bloody malice, fought my life.

Alt. Thou art my sister, and I would not make thee
The lonely mourner of a widow'd bed;
Therefore, thy husband's life is safe: but warn him,
No more to know this hospitable roof.
He has but ill repaid Sciolto's bounty.
We must not meet; 'tis dangerous. Farewel.

[*He is going, Lavinia holds him.*]

Lav. Stay, Altamont, my brother, stay; 'if ever
' Nature, or what is nearer much than nature,
' The kind consent of our agreeing minds,
' Have made us dear to one another, stay,
' And speak one gentle word to your Horatio.
' Behold, his anger melts, he longs to love you,
' To call you friend, then press your hand, with all
' The tender, speechless joy of reconciliation.'

Alt. It cannot, sha'not be—you must not hold me.

Lav. Look kindly, then.

Alt. Each minute that I stay,
Is a new injury to fair Calista.
From thy false friendship, to her arms I'll fly;
' There, if in any pause of love I rest,
' Breathless with bliss, upon her panting breast,
' In broken, melting accents, I will swear,

' Hence.

‘ Henceforth to trust my heart with none but her ;
 Then own, the joys which on her charms attend,
 Have more than paid me for my faithless friend.

[*Altamont breaks from Lavinia, and exit.*]

Hor. Oh, raise thee, my Lavinia, from the earth.
 It is too much ; this tide of flowing grief,
 This wond’rous waste of tears, too much to give
 To an ungrateful friend, and cruel brother.

Lav. Is there not cause for weeping ? Oh, ~~Horatio~~ !
 A brother and a husband were my treasure,
 ’Twas all the little wealth that poor Lavinia
 Sav’d from the shipwreck of her father’s fortunes.
 One half is lost already, If thou leav’st me ;
 If thou shouldst prove unkind to me, as Altamont,
 Whom shall I find to pity my distress,
 To have compassion on a helpless wanderer,
 And give her where to lay her wretched head ?

Hor. Why dost thou wound me with thy soft com-
 plainings ?
 Tho’ Altamont be false, and use me hardly,
 Yet think not I impute his crimes to thee.
 Talk not of being forsaken ; for I’ll keep thee
 Next to my heart, my certain pledge of happiness.
 ‘ Heav’n form’d thee gentle, fair, and full of goodness,
 ‘ And made thee all my portion here on earth :
 ‘ It gave thee to me, as a large amends
 ‘ For fortune, friends, and all the world beside.’

Lav. Then you will love me still, cherish me ever,
 And hide me from misfortune in your bosom.
 ‘ Here end my cares, nor will I lose one thought,
 ‘ How we shall live, or purchase food and raiment.
 ‘ The holy pow’r, who cloaths the senseless earth,
 ‘ With woods, with fruits, with flow’rs and verdant grass,
 ‘ Whose bounteous hand feeds the whole brute creation,
 ‘ Knows all our wants, and has enough to give us.’

Hor. From Genoa, from falsehood and inconstancy,
 To some more honest, distant clime we’ll go :
 Nor will I be beholden to my country,
 For aught but thee, the partner of my flight.

‘ *Lav.* Yes, I will follow thee ; forsake, for thee,
 ‘ My country, brother, friends, ev’n all I have.
 ‘ Tho’ mine’s a little all ; yet were it more,

‘ And

- ' And better far, it shou'd be left for thee,
 ' And all that I would keep, shou'd be Horatio.
 ' So, when a merchant sees his vessel lost,
 ' Tho' richly freighted from a foreign coast,
 ' Gladly, for life, the treasure he wou'd give;
 ' And only wishes to escape, and live:
 ' Gold, and his gains, no more employ his mind:
 ' But, driving o'er the billows with the wind,
 ' Cleaves to one faithful plank, and leaves the rest behind.'

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE, *a garden.*' *Enter Altamont.*

' ALTAMONT.

- ' WITH what unequal tempers are we form'd?
 ' One day, the soul, supine with ease and fulness,
 ' Revels secure, and fondly tells herself
 ' The hour of evil can return no more;
 ' The next, the spirits, pall'd and sick of riot,
 ' Turn all to discord, and we hate our beings,
 ' Curse the past joy, and think it folly all,
 ' And bitterness, and anguish. Oh, last night!
 ' What has ungrateful beauty paid me back,
 ' For all the mafs of friendship which I squander'd?
 ' Coldness, aversion, tears, and sudden sorrow,
 ' Dash'd all my bliss, and damp'd my bridal bed.
 ' Soon as the morning dawn'd, she vanish'd from me,
 ' Relentless to the gentle call of love.
 ' I've lost a friend, and I have gain'd——a wife!
 ' Turn not to thought, my brain; but let me find
 ' Some unfrequented shade; there lay me down,
 ' And let forgetful dulness steal upon me,
 ' To soften and assuage this pain of thinking.'

[*Exit.*]*Lothario and Calista discovered.*

Loth. Weep not, my fair; but let the god of love
 Laugh in thy eyes, and revel in thy heart,
 Kindle again his torch, and hold it high,

To

To light us to new joys. Nor let a thought
Of discord, or disquiet past, molest thee;
But to a long oblivion give thy cares,
And let us melt the present hour in bliss.

Cal. Seek not to sooth me with thy false endearments,
To charm me with thy softness; 'tis in vain:
Thou canst no more betray, nor I be ruin'd.
The hours of folly, and of fond delight,
Are wasted all, and fled; those that remain
Are doom'd to weeping, anguish, and repentance.
I come to charge thee with a long account,
Of all the sorrows I have known already,
And all I have to come; thou hast undone me!

Loth. Unjust Calista! dost thou call it ruin,
To love as we have done; to melt, to languish,
To wish for somewhat exquisitely happy,
And then be blest ev'n to that wish's height?
To die with joy, and straight to live again;
Speechless to gaze, and with tumultuous transport—

Cal. Oh, let me hear no more; I cannot bear it;
'Tis deadly to remembrance. Let that night,
That guilty night, be blotted from the year;
'Let not the voice of mirth or music know it;
'Let it be dark and desolate; no stars
'To glitter o'er it; let it wish for light,
'Yet want it still, and vainly wait the dawn;
For 'twas the night that gave me up to shame,
To sorrow, to the false Lothario.

Loth. Hear this, ye pow'rs! mark, how the fair de-
Sadly complains of violated truth; [ceiver.
She calls me false, ev'n she, the faithless she,
Whom day and night, whom heav'n and earth have heard
Sighing to vow, and tenderly protest,
Ten thousand times, she would be only mine;
And yet, behold, she has given herself away,
Fled from my arms, and wedded to another,
Ev'n to the man whom most I hate on earth.—

Cal. Art thou so base to upbraid me with a crime,
Which nothing but thy cruelty could cause?
If indignation raging in my soul,
For thy unmanly insolence and scorn,
Urg'd me to do a deed of desperation,

And wound myself to be reveng'd on thee,
 Think whom I shou'd devote to death and hell,
 Whom curse as my undoer, but Lothario;
 Hadst thou been just, not all Sciolto's pow'r,
 Not all the vows and pray'rs of fighting Altamont,
 Could have prevail'd, or won me to forsake thee.

Loth. How have I fail'd in justice, or in love?
 Burns not my flame as brightly as at first?
 Ev'n now my heart beats high, I languish for thee,
 My transports are as fierce, as strong my wishes,
 As if thou ne'er hadst blest me with thy beauty.

Cal. How didst thou dare to think that I would live
 A slave to base desires, and brutal pleasures,
 To be a wretched wanton for thy leisure,
 To toy, and waste an hour of idle time with?
 My soul disdains thee for so mean a thought.

Loth. The driving storm of passion will have way,
 And I must yield before it. Wert thou calm,
 Love, the poor criminal, whom thou hast doom'd,
 Has yet a thousand tender things to plead,
 To charm thy rage, and mitigate his fate.

Enter behind them Altamont.

Alt. 'I have lost my peace'—Ha! do I live and wake?

Cal. Hadst thou been true, how happy had I been!
 Not Altamont, but thou, hadst been my lord.
 But wherefore nam'd I happiness with thee?
 It is for thee, for thee, that I am curs'd;
 For thee my secret soul each hour arraigns me,
 Calls me to answer for my virtue stain'd,
 My honour lost to thee: for thee it haunts me;
 With stern Sciolto vowing vengeance on me;
 With Altamont complaining for his wrongs——

Alt. Behold him here—— *[Coming forward.*

Cal. Ah! *[Starting.*

Alt. The wretch, whom thou hast made;
 Curses and sorrows hast thou heap'd upon him,
 And vengeance is the only good that's left. *[Drawing.*

Loth. Thou hast ta'en me somewhat unawares, 'tis true:
 But love and war take turns, like day and night,
 And little preparation serves my turn,
 Equal to both, and arm'd for either field.

We've

We've long been foes, this moment ends our quarrel;
Earth, Heav'n, and fair Calista judge the combat!

Cal. Distraction! Fury! Sorrow! Shame! and death!

' *Alt.* Thou hast talk'd too much, thy breath is poison
' It taints the ambient air; this for my father, [to me.
' This for Sciolto, and this last for Altamont.'

*[They fight; Lothario is wounded once or twice,
and then falls.]*

Loth. Oh, Altamont! thy genius is the stronger!
Thou hast prevail'd!—My fierce ambitious soul
Declining droops, and all her fires grow pale;
Yet let not this advantage swell thy pride,
I conquer'd in my turn, in love I triumph'd.
Those joys are lodg'd beyond the reach of fate;
That sweet revenge comes smiling to my thoughts,
Adorns my fall, and cheers my heart in dying. [*Dies.*

Cal. And what remains for me, beset with shame,
Encompass'd round with wretchedness? There is
But this one way to break the toil, and 'scape.

*[She catches up Lothario's sword, and offers to kill her-
self; Altamont runs to her, and wrests it from her.]*

Alt. What means thy frantic rage!

Cal. Off! let me go.

Alt. Oh! thou hast more than murder'd me; yet still,
Still art thou here! and my soul starts with horror,
At thought of any danger that may reach thee.

Cal. Think'st thou I mean to live? to be forgiven?
Oh, thou hast known but little of Calista!
If thou hadst never heard my shame, if only
The midnight moon and silent stars had seen it,
I wou'd not bear to be reproach'd by them,
But dig down deep to find a grave beneath,
And hide me from their beams.

Sciolto within.] What, ho! my son!

' *Alt.* It is Sciolto calls; come near and find me;
' The wretched'st thing of all my kind on earth.'

Cal. Is it the voice of thunder, or my father?
Madness! Confusion! let the storm come on,
Let the tumultuous roar drive all upon me;
Dash my devoted bark, ye surges, break it!
'Tis for my ruin that the tempest rises.

When

44 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Whom I am lost, sunk to the bottom low,
Peace shall return, and all be calm again.

Enter Sciolto.

Sci. Ev'n now Rossino leap'd the garden wall——
Ha ! Death has been among you—Oh, my fears !
Last night thou hadst a diff'rence with thy friend,
The cause thou gav'st me for it was a damn'd one.
Didst thou not wrong the man who told thee truth ?
Answer me quick——

Alt. Oh ! press me not to speak ;
Ev'n now my heart is breaking, and the mention
Will lay me dead before you. See that body,
And guess my shame ! my ruin ! Oh, Calista !

Sci. It is enough ! but I am slow to execute,
And justice lingers in my lazy hand ;
Thus let me wipe dishonour from my name,
And cut thee from the earth, thou stain to goodness——

[Offers to kill Calista, Altamont holds him.]

Alt. Stay thee, Sciolto, thou rash father, stay,
Or turn the point on me, and through my breast
Cut out the bloody passage to Calista ;
So shall my love be perfect, while for her
I die, for whom alone I wish'd to live.

Cal. No, Altamont ; my heart, that scorn'd thy love,
Shall never be indebted to thy pity.
Thus torn, defac'd, and wretched as I seem,
Still I have something of Sciolto's virtue.
Yes, yes, my father, I applaud thy justice ;
Strike home, and I will bless thee for the blow :
Be merciful, and free me from my pain ;
'Tis sharp, 'tis terrible, and I cou'd curse
The chearful day, men, earth, and heav'n, and thee,
Ev'n thee, thou venerable good old man,
For being author of a wretch like me.

Alt. Listen not to the wildness of her raving ;
Remember nature ! Shou'd thy daughter's murder
Defile that hand, so just, so great in arms,
Her blood wou'd rest upon thee to posterity,
Pollute thy name, and sully all thy wars.

Cal. Have I not wrong'd his gentle nature much ?
And yet behold him pleading for my life !
Oft as thou art to virtue, Oh, Calista !

I think thou canst not bear to be outdone :

Then haste to die, and be oblig'd no more.

Sci. Thy pious care has giv'n me time to think,
And sav'd me from a crime ; then rest, my sword ;

To honour have I kept thee ever sacred,
Nor will I stain thee with a rash revenge.

But, mark me well, I will have justice done ;
Hope not to bear away thy crimes unpunished :
I will see justice executed on thee,

Ev'n to a Roman strictness ; and thou, nature,
Or whatsoe'er thou art, that plead'st within me,
Be still ; thy tender strugglings are in vain.

Cal. Then am I doom'd to live, and bear your
triumph ?

To groan beneath your scorn and fierce upbraiding,
Daily to be reproach'd, and have my misery

At morn, at noon, at night, told over to me,

' Lest my remembrance might grow pitiful,

' And grant a moment's interval of peace ;'

Is this, is this the mercy of a father ?

I only beg to die, and he denies me.

Sci. Hence, from my sight ! thy father cannot bear thee ;

Fly with thy infamy to some dark cell,

Where, on the confines of eternal night,

Mourning, misfortune, cares, and anguish dwell ;

Where, ugly shame hides her opprobrious head,

And death and hell detested rule maintain ;

There howl out the remainder of thy life,

And wish thy name may be no more remember'd.

Cal. Yes, I will fly to some such dismal place,

And be more curst than you can wish I were ;

This fatal form, that drew on my undoing,

Fasting, and tears, and hardship shall destroy :

Nor light, nor food, nor comfort will I know,

Nor ought that may continue hated life.

Then, when you see me meagre, wan, and chang'd,

Stretch'd at my length, and dying in my cave,

On that cold earth I mean shall be my grave,

Perhaps you may relent, and sighing say,

At length her tears have wash'd her stains away ;

At length 'tis time her punishment should cease ;

Die, thou poor suff'ring wretch, and be at peace.

[Exit Calista.

Sci.

Sci. Who of my servants wait there?

Enter two or three Servants.

Raise that body, and bear it in. On your lives
Take care my doors be guarded well, that none
Pass out, or enter, but by my appointment.

[Exeunt servants, with Lothario's body.]

Alt. There is a fatal fury in your visage,
It blazes fierce, and menaces destruction.

‘ My father, I am sick of many sorrows,
‘ Ev’n now my easy heart is breaking with ’em ;
‘ Yet, above all, one fear distracts me most ;’
I tremble at the vengeance which you meditate
On the poor, faithless, lovely, dear Calista.

Sci. Hast thou not read what brave Virginius did ?
With his own hand he slew his only daughter,
To save her from the fierce Decemvir’s lust.
He slew her yet unspotted, to prevent
The shame which she might know. Then what should
I do ?

But thou hast ty’d my hand.——I wo’not kill her ;
Yet, by the ruin she has brought upon us,
The common infamy that brands us both,
She sha’not ’scape.

Alt. You mean that she shall die then ?

Sci. Ask me not what, nor how I have resolv’d,
For all within is anarchy and uproar.
Oh, Altamont ! What a vast scheme of joy
Has this one day destroy’d ? Well did I hope
This daughter wou’d have blest my latter days ;
That I should live to see you the world’s wonder,
So happy, great, and good, that none were like you.
While I, from busy life and care set free,
Had spent the evening of my age at home,
Among a little prattling race of yours :
There, like an old man, talk’d a-while, and then
Laid down and slept in peace. Instead of this,
Sorrow and shame must bring me to my grave——
‘ Oh, damn her ! damn her !’

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Arm yourself, my lord :
Rossano, who but now escap’d the garden,
Has gather’d in the street a band of rioters,

Who

Who threaten you and all your friends with ruin,
Unless Lothario be return'd in safety.

[*Exit.*

Sci. By Heav'n, their fury rises to my wish,
Nor shall misfortune know my house alone,
But thou, Lothario, and thy race shall pay me
For all the sorrows which my age is curs'd with.
I think my name as great, my friends as potent,
As any in the state; all shall be summon'd;
I know that all will join their hands to ours,
And vindicate thy vengeance. When our force
Is full, and arm'd, we shall expect thy sword
To join with us, and sacrifice to justice.— [*Exit Sciolto.*

Alt. There is a stupid weight upon my senses;
' A dismal fullen stillness, that succeeds
' The storm of rage and grief, like silent death,
' After the tumult and the noise of life.
' Wou'd it were death, as sure 'tis wond'rous like it,
' For I am sick of living; my soul's pall'd,
' She kindles not with anger or revenge:
' Love was th' informing, active fire within:
' Now that is quench'd, the mass forgets to move,
' And longs to mingle with its kindred earth.'

[*A tumultuous noise, with clashing of swords
as at a little distance.*

Enter Lavinia with two servants, their swords drawn.

Lav. Fly, swiftly fly, to my Horatio's aid,
Nor lose your vain officious cares on me;
Bring me my lord, my husband, to my arms;
He is Lavinia's life; bring him me safe,
And I shall be at ease, be well and happy.

[*Exeunt servants.*

Alt. Art thou Lavinia? Oh! what barb'rous hand
Could wrong thy poor defenceless innocence,
And leave such marks of more than savage fury?

Lav. My brother! Oh, my heart is full of fears;
Perhaps ev'n now my dear Horatio bleeds.—
Not far from hence, as passing to the port,
By a mad multitude we were furrounded,
Who ran upon us with uplifted swords,
And cry'd aloud for vengeance, and Lothario.
My lord, with ready boldness, stood the shock,
To shelter me from danger; but in vain,

Had

Had not a party from Sciolto's palace
Rush'd out, and snatch'd me from amidst the fray.

Alt. What of my friend?

Law. Ha! by my joys, 'tis he! [*Looking out.*
He lives, he comes to bless me, he is safe!—

Enter Horatio, with two or three servants, their swords drawn.

1 Serv. 'Twere at the utmost hazard of your life
To venture forth again, till we are stronger:
Their number trebles ours.

Hor. No matter, let it;
Death is not half so shocking as that traitor.
My honest soul is mad with indignation,
To think her plainness could be so abus'd,
As to mistake that wretch, and call him friend;
I cannot bear the sight.

Alt. Open, thou earth,
Gape wide, and take me down to thy dark bosom,
To hide me from Horatio.

Hor. Oh, Lavinia!
Believe not but I joy to see thee safe:
Wou'd our ill fortune had not drove us hither:
I cou'd ev'n wish we rather had been wreck'd
On any other shore, than sav'd on this.

Law. Oh, let us bless the mercy that preserv'd us,
That gracious Pow'r that sav'd us for each other;
And, to adorn the sacrifice of praise,
Offer forgiveness too; be thou like heav'n,
And put away th' offences of thy friend,
Far, far from thy remembrance.

Alt. I have mark'd him,
' To see if one forgiving glance stole hither;
' If any spark of friendship were alive,
' That wou'd by sympathy at meeting glow,
' And strive to kindle up the flame a-new;
' 'Tis lost, 'tis gone; his soul is quite estrang'd,
' And knows me for its counterpart no more.

Hor. Thou know'st thy rule, thy empire in Horatio;
' Nor canst thou ask in vain, command in vain,
' Where nature, reason, nay, where love is judge;
' But when you urge my temper to comply
' With what it most abhors, I cannot do it.

Law. Where didst thou get this sullen gloomy hate?
' It

' It was not in thy nature to be thus ;
 ' Come, put it off, and let thy heart be chearful,
 ' Be gay again, and know the joys of friendship,
 ' The trust, security, and mutual tenderness,
 ' The double joys, where each is glad for both ;
 ' Friendship, the wealth, the last retreat and strength,
 ' Secure against ill fortune, and the world.'

Hor. I am not apt to take a light offence,
 But patient of the failings of my friends,
 And willing to forgive: but when an injury
 Stabs to the heart, and rouses my resentment,
 (Perhaps it is the fault of my rude nature)
 I own, I cannot easily forgive it.

Alt. Thou hast forgot me.

Hor. No.

Alt. Why are thy eyes
 Impatient of me then, scornful, and fierce ?

Hor. Because they speak the meaning of my heart :
 Because they're honest, and disdain a villain.

Alt. I've wrong'd thee much, Horatio.

Hor. True, thou hast.

When I forget it, may I be a wretch,
 Vile as thyself, a false perfidious fellow,
 An infamous, believing, British husband.

Alt. I've wrong'd thee much, and Heav'n has well
 aveng'd it.

I have not, since we parted, been at peace,
 Nor known one joy sincere ; ' our broken friendship
 ' Pursu'd me to the last retreat of love,
 ' Stood glaring, like a ghost, and made me cold with
 horror.

' Misfortunes on misfortunes press upon me,
 ' Swell o'er my head, like waves, and dash me down ;
 ' Sorrow, remorse, and shame, have torn my soul ;
 ' They hang, like winter, on my youthful hopes,
 ' And blast the spring and promise of my year.

Lav. ' So flow'rs are gather'd to adorn a grave,
 ' To lose their freshness amongst bones and rottenness,
 ' And have their odours stifled in the dust.'

Canst thou hear this, thou cruel, hard Horatio ?

Canst thou behold thy Altamont undone ?

' That gentle, that dear youth ! canst thou behold him,'

His poor heart broken, death in his pale visage.
And groaning out his woes, yet stand unmov'd?

Hor. The brave and wise I pity in misfortune;
But when ingratitude and folly suffers,
'Tis weakness to be touch'd.

Alt. I wo'not ask thee
To pity or forgive me; but confess
This scorn, this insolence of hate, is just;
'Tis constancy of mind, and manly in thee.
But, Oh! had I been wrong'd by thee, Horatio,
There is a yielding softness in my heart
Cou'd ne'er have stood it out; but I had ran,
With streaming eyes, and open arms; upon thee,
And press'd thee close, close!

Hor. I must hear no more,
Thy weakness is contagious; I shall catch it,
And be a tame, fond wretch.

Lav. Where wou'dst thou go?
Wou'dst thou part thus? You sha'not, 'tis impossible;
For I will bar thy passage, kneeling thus.
Perhaps thy cruel hand may spurn me off,
But I will throw my body in thy way,
And thou shalt trample o'er my faithful bosom,
Tread on me, wound me, kill me, ere thou pass.

Alt. Urge not in vain thy pious suit, Lavinia,
I have enough to rid me of my pain.
Calista, thou hadst reach'd my heart before;
To make all sure, my friend repeats the blow:
But in the grave our cares shall be forgotten,
There love and friendship cease.

[*Falls.*

[*Lavinia runs to him, and endeavours to raise him.*

'*Lav.* Speak to me, Altamont.
'He faints! he dies! Now turn and see thy triumph!
'My brother! But our cares shall end together;
'Here will I lay me down by thy dear side,
'Bemoan thy too hard fate, then share it with thee,
'And never see my cruel Lord again.'

[*Horatio runs to Altamont, and raises him in his arms.*

Hor. It is too much to bear! Look up, my Altamont!
My stubborn, unrelenting heart has kill'd him.

'Look up and bless me; tell me that thou liv'st.
'Oh! I have urg'd thy gentleness too far; [*He revives.*

'Do

' Do thou and my Lavinia both forgive me ;
 A flood of tenderness comes o'er my soul ;
 I cannot speak—I love, forgive, and pity thee——

Alt. I thought that nothing cou'd have stay'd my soul,
 That long ere this her flight had reach'd the stars ;
 But thy known voice has lur'd her back again.
 Methinks, I fain wou'd set all right with thee,
 Make up this most unlucky breach, and then,
 With thine and Heaven's forgiveness on my soul,
 Shrink to my grave, and be at ease for ever.

Hor. By Heav'n, my heart bleeds for thee ; ev'n this
 moment

I feel thy pangs of disappointed love.

' Is it not pity that this youth should fall,
 ' That all his wond'rous goodness should be lost,
 ' And the world never know it ? Oh, my Altamont !'
 Give me thy sorrows, let me bear 'em for thee,
 And shelter thee from ruin.

Lav. Oh, my brother !
 Think not but we will share in all thy woes ;
 We'll sit all day, and tell sad tales of love :
 And when we light upon some faithless woman,
 Some beauty, like Calista, false and fair,
 We'll fix our grief, and our complaining there ;
 We'll curse the nymph that drew the ruin on,
 And mourn the youth that was, like thee, undone.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

A Room hung with Black ; on one side Lothario's Body on a Bier ; on the other a Table, with a Scull and other Bones, a Book and a Lamp on it.

Calista is discovered on a Couch, in Black ; her Hang bang- ing loose and disordered. After soft Music, she rises and comes forward.

‘ S O N G.

I.

‘ **H**EAR, you midnight phantoms, hear,
 ‘ You who pale and wan appear,
 ‘ And fill the wretch who wakes with fear ;
 ‘ You, who wander, scream and groan
 ‘ Round the mansions once your own ;
 ‘ You, who still your crimes upbraid ;
 ‘ You, who rest not with the dead ;
 ‘ From the coverts where you stray,
 ‘ Where you lurk and shun the day,
 ‘ From the charnel and the tomb,
 ‘ Hither haste ye, hither come.

II.

‘ Chide Calista for delay,
 ‘ Tell her, ’tis for her you stay ;
 ‘ Bid her die and come away.
 ‘ See the sexton with his spade,
 ‘ See the grave already made ;
 ‘ Listen, fair one, to thy kneel,
 ‘ This music is thy passing bell.’

Cal. ’Tis well ! these solemn sounds, this pomp of
 horror,
 Are fit to feed the frenzy in my soul.
 Here’s room for meditation ev’n to madness,
 Till the mind burst with thinking. This dull flame
 Sleeps in the socket. Sure the book was left

To

To tell me something ;—for instruction then—

He teaches holy sorrow and contrition,

And penitence. Is it become an art, then ?

A trick that lazy, dull, luxurious gownmen

Can teach us to do over ? I'll no more on't ;

[*Throwing away the book.*]

I have more real anguish in my heart,

Than all their pedant discipline e'er knew,

What charnel has been rifled for these bones ?

Fie ! this is pageantry ;—they look uncouthly.

But what of that, if he or she that own'd 'em

Safe from disquiet sit, and smile to see

The farce their miserable relicks play ?

But here's a sight is terrible indeed !

Is this that haughty, gallant, gay, Lothario,

That dear perfidious—Ah !—how pale he looks !

How grim with clotted blood, and those dead eyes !

Ascend, ye ghosts, fantastic forms of night,

In all your diff'rent dreadful shapes ascend,

And match the present horror, if you can.

Enter Sciolto.

Sci. This dead of night, this silent hour of darkness

Nature for rest ordain'd, and soft repose ;

And yet distraction, and tumultuous jars,

Keep all our frightened citizens awake :

' The senate, weak, divided, and irresolute,

' Want pow'r to succour the afflicted state.

' Vainly in words and long debates they're wise,

' While the fierce factions scorn their peaceful orders,

' And drown the voice of law in noise and anarchy.'

Amidst the general wreck, see where she stands,

[*Pointing to Calista.*]

Like Helen, in the night when Troy was sack'd,

Spectatress of the mischief which she made.

Cal. It is Sciolto ! Be thyself, my soul ;

Be strong to bear his fatal indignation,

That he may see thou art not lost so far,

But somewhat still of his great spirit lives

In the forlorn Calista.

Sci. Thou wert once

My daughter.

Cal. Happy were it I had dy'd,
And never lost that name.

Sci. That's something yet ;
Thou wert the very darling of my age :
I thought the day too short to gaze upon thee,
That all the blessings I could gather for thee,
By cares on earth, and by my pray'rs to Heav'n,
Were little for my fondness to bestow ;
Why didst thou turn to folly, then, and curse me ?

Cal. Because my soul was rudely drawn from yours ;
A poor imperfect copy of my father,
' Where goodness, and the strength of manly virtue,
' Was thinly planted, and the idle void
' Fill'd up with light belief, and easy fondness ;'
It was, because I lov'd, and was a woman.

Sci. Hadst thou been honest, thou hadst been a cheru-
But of that joy, as of a gem long lost, [him ;
Beyond redemption gone, think we no more.
Hast thou e'er dar'd to meditate on death ?

Cal. I have, as on the end of shame and sorrow.

Sci. Ha ! answer me ! Say, hast thou coolly thought ?
'Tis not the Stoick's lessons got by rote,
The pomp of words, and pedant dissertations,
That can sustain thee in that hour of terror ;
Books have taught cowards to talk nobly of it,
But when the trial comes, they stand aghast ;
Hast thou consider'd what may happen after it ?
How thy account may stand, and what to answer ?

Cal. I've turn'd my eyes inward upon myself,
Where foul offence and shame have laid all waste ;
' Therefore my soul abhors the wretched dwelling,
And longs to find some better place of rest.

Sci. 'Tis justly thought, and worthy of that spirit
That dwelt in ancient Latian breasts, when Rome
Was mistress of the world. I wou'd go on,
And tell thee all my purpose : but it sticks
Here at my heart, and cannot find a way.

Cal. Then spare the telling, if it be a pain,
And write the meaning with your poignard here.

Sci. Oh ! truly guess'd—see'st thou, this trembling
hand—— [Holding up a dagger.
Thrice justice urg'd—and thrice the slack'ning sinews
Forgot

Forgot their office, and confess'd the father.
 At length the stubborn virtue has prevail'd,
 It must, it must be so—Oh! take it then,
[Giving the dagger.]

And know the rest untaught.

Cal. I understand you.

It is but thus, and both are satisfy'd.

[She offers to kill herself: Sciolto catches hold of her arm.]

Sci. A moment, give me yet a moment's space.

The stern, the rigid judge has been obey'd;
 Now nature, and the father, claim their turns.
 I've held the balance with an iron hand,
 And put off ev'ry tender human thought,
 To doom my child to death; but spare my eyes
 The most unnatural sight, lest their strings crack,
 My old brain split, and I grow mad with horror.

Cal. Ha! is it possible; and is there yet
 Some little dear remain of love and tenderness
 For poor, undone Calista, in your heart?

Sci. Oh! when I think what pleasure I took in thee,
 What joys thou gav'st me in thy prattling infancy,
 Thy sprightly wit, and early blooming beauty;
 How I have stood, and fed my eyes upon thee,
 Then, lifting up my hands, and wond'ring, blest thee;
 By my strong grief, my heart ev'n melts within me;
 I could curse Nature, and that tyrant, honour,
 For making me thy father, and thy judge;
 Thou art my daughter still.

Cal. For that kind word,
 Thus let me fall, thus humbly to the earth,
 Weep on your feet, and bless you for this goodness.
 Oh! 'tis too much for this offending wretch,
 This parricide, that murders with her crimes,
 Shortens her father's age, and cuts him off,
 Ere little more than half his years be number'd.

Sci. Would it were otherwise—but thou must die.—

Cal. That I must die, it is my only comfort;
 Death is the privilege of human nature,
 And life without it were not worth our taking:
 'Thither the poor, the pris'ner, and the mourner,
 'Fly for relief, and lay their burthens down.'
 Come then, and take me into thy cold arms,

Thou

56 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Thou meagre shade ; here let me breathe my last,
Charm'd with my father's pity and forgiveness,
More than if angels tun'd their golden viols,
And sung a requiem to my parting soul.

Sci. I'm summon'd hence ; ere this my friends expect
There is I know not what of sad presage, [me.
That tells me, I shall never see thee more ;
If it be so, this is our last farewell,

And these the parting pangs, which nature feels,
When anguish rends the heart-strings—Oh, my daughter !
[Exit Sciolto.

Cal. Now think, thou curst Calista, now behold
The desolation, horror, blood, and ruin,
Thy crimes and fatal folly spread around,
That loudly cry for vengeance on thy head ;
Yet Heav'n, who knows our weak, imperfect natures,
How blind with passions, and how prone to evil,
Makes not too strict inquiry for offences,
But is aton'd by penitence and pray'r :
Cheap recompence ! here 'twould not be receiv'd,
Nothing but blood can make the expiation,
And cleanse the soul from inbred, deep pollution.
And see, another injur'd wretch is come,
To call for justice from my tardy hand.

Enter Altamont.

Alt. Hail to you, horrors ! hail, thou house of death !
And thou, the lovely mistress of these shades,
Whose beauty gilds the more than midnight darkness,
And makes it grateful as the dawn of day.
Oh, take me in, a fellow-mourner, with thee,
I'll number groan for groan, and tear for tear ;
And when the fountain of thy eyes are dry,
Mine shall supply the stream, and weep for both.

Cal. I know thee well, thou art the injur'd Altamont ;
Thou com'st to urge me with the wrongs I've done thee ;
But know, I stand upon the brink of life,
And in a moment mean to set me free
From shame and thy upbraiding.

Alt. Falsely, falsely
Dost thou accuse me ! When did I complain,
Or murmur at my fate ? ' For thee I have
' Forgot the temper of Italian husbands,

' And

‘ And fondness has prevail’d upon revenge.’
 I bore my load of infamy with patience,
 ‘ As holy men do punishment from Heav’n ;’
 Nor thought it hard, because it came from thee.
 Oh, then, forbid me not to mourn thy loss,
 To wish some better fate had rul’d our loves,
 And that Calista had been mine, and true.

Cal. Oh, Altamont ! ’tis hard for souls like mine,
 Haughty and fierce, to yield they’ve done amiss.
 But, Oh, behold ! my proud, disdainful heart
 Bends to thy gentler virtue. Yes, I own,
 Such is thy truth, thy tenderness, and love ;
 ‘ Such are the graces that adorn thy youth,’
 That, were I not abandon’d to destruction,
 With thee I might have liv’d for ages bless’d,
 And dy’d in peace within thy faithful arms.

Alt. Then happiness is still within our reach.
 Here let remembrance lose our past misfortunes,
 Tear all records that hold the fatal story ;
 Here let our joys begin, from hence go on,
 In long successive order.

Cal. What ! in death ?

Alt. Then, art thou fix’d to die ?——But be it so ;
 We’ll go together ; my advent’rous love
 Shall follow thee ‘ to those uncertain beings.

‘ Whether our lifeless shades are doom’d to wander
 ‘ In gloomy groves, with discontented ghosts ;
 ‘ Or whether thro’ the upper air we fleet,
 ‘ And tread the fields of light ; still I’ll pursue thee,’
 ‘Till fate ordains that we shall part no more.

Cal. Oh, no ! Heav’n has some other better lot in store
 To crown thee with. Live, and be happy long ;
 Live, for some maid that shall deserve thy goodness,
 Some kind, unpractis’d heart, that never yet
 Has listen’d to the false ones of thy sex,
 Nor known the arts of ours ; she shall reward thee,
 Meet thee with virtues equal to thy own,
 Charm thee with sweetness, beauty, and with truth ;
 Be blest in thee alone, and thou in her.

Enter Horatio.

Hor. Now, mourn indeed, ye miserable pair ;
 For now the measure of your woes is full.

Alt.

Alt. What dost thou mean, Horatio?

Hor. Oh, 'tis dreadful!

The great, the good Sciolto dies this moment.

Cal. My father!

Alt. That's a deadly stroke, indeed.

Hor. Not long ago, he privately went forth,
Attended but by few, and those unbidden.
I heard which way he took, and straight pursu'd him;
But found him compass'd by Lothario's faction,
Almost alone, amidst a crowd of foes.

Too late we brought him aid, and drove them back;
Ere that, his frantic valour had provok'd
The death he seem'd to wish for from their swords.

Cal. And dost thou bear me yet, thou patient earth?
Dost thou not labour with thy murd'rous weight?
And you, ye glitt'ring, heav'nly host of stars,
Hide your fair heads in clouds, or I shall blast you;
For I am all contagion, death, and ruin,
And nature sickens at me. Rest, thou world,
This parricide shall be thy plague no more;
Thus, thus, I set thee free. *[Stabs herself.]*

Hor. Oh, fatal rashness!

Alt. Thou dost instruct me well. To lengthen life
Is but to trifle now.

*[Altamont offers to kill himself; Horatio prevents
him, and wrests his sword from him.]*

Hor. Ha! what means
The frantic Altamont? Some foe to man
Has breath'd on ev'ry breast contagious fury,
And epidemic madness.

Enter Sciolto, pale and bloody, supported by servants.

Cal. Oh, my heart!

Well may'st thou fail; for see, the spring that fed
Thy vital stream is wasted, and runs low.
My father! will you now at last, forgive me,
If, after all my crimes, and all your suff'rings,
I call you once again by that dear name?
Will you forget my shame, and those wide wounds?
Lift up your hand, and bless me, ere I go
Down to my dark abode?

Sci. Alas, my daughter!

Thou hast rashly ventur'd in a stormy sea,

Where

Where life, fame, virtue, all were wreck'd and lost.
 But sure thou hast borne thy part in all the anguish,
 And smarted with the pain. Then, rest in peace :
 Let silence and oblivion hide thy name,
 And save thee from the malice of posterity ;
 And may'st thou find with Heav'n the same forgiveness,
 As with thy father here.—Die, and be happy.

Cal. Celestial sounds ! Peace dawns upon my soul,
 And ev'ry pain grows less—Oh, gentle Altamont !
 Think not too hardly of me when I'm gone ;
 But pity me——Had I but early known
 Thy wond'rous worth, thou excellent young man,
 We had been happier both——Now, 'tis too late :
 And yet my eyes take pleasure to behold thee ;
 Thou art their last dear object——Mercy, Heav'n !

[*She dies.*]

Alt. Cold ! dead and cold ! and yet thou art not chang'd,
 But lovely still. Hadst thou a thousand faults,
 What heart so hard, what virtue so severe,
 But at that beauty must of force relented,
 Melted to pity, love, and to forgiveness ?

Sci. Oh, turn thee from that fatal object, Altamont.
 Come near, and let me bless thee, ere I die.
 To thee, and brave Horatio, I bequeath
 My fortunes——Lay me by thy noble father,
 And love my memory, as thou hast his ;
 For thou hast been my son—Oh, gracious Heav'n !
 Thou that hast endless blessings still in store
 For virtue, and for filial piety,
 Let grief, disgrace, and want be far away ;
 But multiply thy mercies on his head.
 Let honour, greatness, goodness still be with him,
 And peace in all his ways——

[*He dies.*]

Alt. Take, take it all ;
 To thee Horatio, I resign the gift,
 While I pursue my father and my love,
 And find my only portion in the grave.

Hor. The storm of grief bears hard upon his youth,
 And bends him, like a drooping flower, to earth.
 By such examples, are we taught to prove
 The sorrows that attend unlawful love.
 Death, or some worse misfortune, soon divide
 The injur'd bridegroom from his guilty bride.

If you would have the nuptial union last,
Let virtue be the bond that ties it fast. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

END of the FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

YOU see the tripping dame could find no favour;
Dearly she paid for breach of good behaviour;
Nor could her loving husband's fondness save her. }
Italian ladies lead but scurvy lives,
There's dreadful dealing with eloping wives:
Thus 'tis, because these husbands are obey'd
By force of laws, which for themselves they made.
With tales of old prescriptions, they confine }
The right of marriage-rules to their male line,
And huff, and domineer by right divine.
Had we the pow'r, we'd make the tyrants know,
What 'tis to fail in duties which they owe;
We'd teach the saunt'ring squire, who loves to roam,
Forgetful of his own dear spouse at home;
Who snores, at night, supinely by her side;
'Twas not for this the nuptial knot was ty'd.
The plodding petty-fogger, and the cit,
Have learn'd, at least, this modern way of wit,
Each ill-bred, senseless rogue, tho' ne'er so dull,
Has th' impudence to think his wife a fool;
He spends the night, where merry wags resort,
With joking clubs, and eighteen-penny port;
While she, poor soul, 's contented to regale,
By a sad sea-coal fire, with wigs and ale.
Well may the cuckold-making tribe find grace,
And fill an absent husband's empty place.
If you wou'd e'er bring constancy in fashion,
You men must first begin the reformation.
Then shall the golden age of love return,
No turtle for her wand'ring mate shall mourn;
No foreign charms shall cause domestic strife,
But every married man shall toast his wife;
Phillis shall not be to the country sent,
For carnivals in town to keep a tedious Lent;
Lampoons shall cease, and envious scandal die,
And all shall live in peace, like my good man and I.



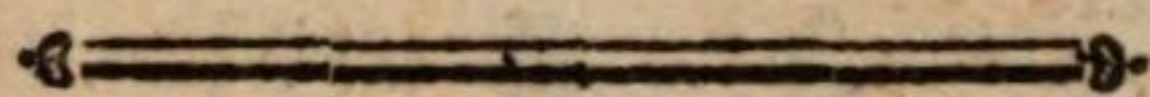
Roberts del.

Published for Bell's British Theatre Aug: 1st 1776.

J. Walker Sculp.

*M^r. SHERIDAN in the Character of CATO.
Eternity! thou pleasing dreadful Thought.*

5.
BELL'S EDITION.



C A T O ;

A TRAGEDY, by Mr. ADDISON:

AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. WILD, Prompter.

*Ecce Spectaculum dignum, ad quod respiciat, intentus operi suo, Deus!
Ecce par Deo dignum, vir fortis cum malâ fortunâ compositus! Non
video, inquam, quid habeat in terris Jupiter pulchrius, si convertere
animum velit, quàm ut spectet Catonem, jam partibus non semel fractis,
nihilominus inter ruinas publicas erectum.*

Sen. de Divin. Prov.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCLXXVI.

THE SECOND EDITION.

C. A. T. O.

A. T. R. O. D. I. O. N.

AS APPEARED AT THE

CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

By the Rev. Canon

W. A. T. R. O. D. I. O. N.

W. A. T. R. O. D. I. O. N.

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, LONDON.

See the Preface.



LONDON.

Printed by the University Press.

1844.

—

—

V E R S E S

To the AUTHOR of the

T R A G E D Y of C A T O.

WHILE you the fierce divided Britons awe,
And Cato with an equal virtue draw;
While envy is itself in wonder lost,
And factions strive who shall applaud you most;
Forgive the fond ambition of a friend,
Who hopes himself, not you, to recommend:
And joins the applause which all the learn'd bestow
On one, to whom a perfect work they owe.
To my * light scenes I once inscrib'd your name,
And impotently strove to borrow fame;
Soon will that die, which adds thy name to mine;
Let me, then, live, join'd to a work of thine.

RICHARD STEELE.

THO' Cato shines in Virgil's epic song,
Prescribing laws among th' Elysian throng;
Though Lucan's verse, exalted by his name,
O'er gods themselves has rais'd the hero's fame;
The Roman stage did ne'er his image see,
Drawn at full length; a task reserv'd for thee.
By thee we view the finish'd figure rise,
And awful march before our ravish'd eyes;
We hear his voice, asserting virtue's cause;
His fate renew'd our deep attention draws,
Excites by turns our various hopes and fears,
And all the patriot in thy scene appears.
On Tiber's banks thy thought was first inspir'd;
'Twas there, to some indulgent grove retir'd,
Rome's ancient fortunes rolling in thy mind,
Thy happy muse this manly work design'd:

* Tender Husband, dedicated to Mr. Addison.

Or in a dream thou saw'st Rome's genius stand,
 And, leading Cato in his sacred hand,
 Point out th' immortal subject of thy lays,
 And ask this labour, to record his praise.
 'Tis done—the hero lives, and charms our age !
 While nobler morals grace the British stage.
 Great Shakespeare's ghost, the solemn strain to hear,
 (Methinks I see the laurel'd shade appear !)
 Will hover o'er the scene, and wond'ring view
 His fav'rite Brutus rival'd thus by you.
 Such Roman greatness in each action shines,
 Such Roman eloquence adorn your lines,
 That sure the Sibyls books this year foretold,
 And in some mystic leaf was seen inroll'd,
 ' Rome, turn thy mournful eyes from Afric's shore,
 ' Nor in her sands thy Cato's tomb explore !
 ' When thrice six hundred times the circling sun
 ' His annual race shall through the zodiac run,
 ' An isle remote his monument shall rear,
 ' And ev'ry generous Briton pay a tear.'

J. HUGHES.

WHAT do we see ! Is Cato then become
 A greater name in Britain than in Rome ?
 Does mankind now admire his virtues more,
 Though Lucan, Horace, Virgil, wrote before ?
 How will posterity this truth explain ?
 " Cato begins to live in Anna's reign :"
 The world's great chiefs, in council or in arms,
 Rise in your lines with more exalted charms ;
 Illustrious deeds in distant nations wrought,
 And virtues by departed heroes taught,
 Raise in your soul a pure immortal flame,
 Adorn your life, and consecrate your fame ;
 To your renown all ages you subdue,
 And Cæsar fought, and Cato bled for you.

All Soul's College, Oxon.

EDWARD YOUNG.

'TIS nobly done thus to enrich the stage,
 And raise the thoughts of a degen'rate age ;
 To shew how endless joys from freedom spring,
 How life in bondage is a worthless thing.

The

The inborn greatness of your soul we view,
 You tread the paths frequented by the few;
 With so much strength you write, and so much ease,
 Virtue and sense ! how durst you hope to please ?
 Yet crowds the sentiments of ev'ry line
 Impartial clap'd, and own'd the work divine.
 Ev'n the sour critics, who malicious came,
 Eager to censure, and resolv'd to blame,
 Finding the hero regularly rise,
 Great while he lives, but greater when he dies,
 Sullen approv'd, too obstinate to melt,
 And sicken'd with the pleasures which they felt.
 Not so the fair their passions secret kept,
 Silent they heard, but as they heard, they wept;
 When gloriously the blooming Marcus dy'd,
 And Cato told the gods, *I'm satisfy'd*.

See ! how your lays the British youth inflame !
 They long to shoot and ripen into fame,
 Applauding theatres disturb their rest,
 And unborn Cato's heave in ev'ry breast ;
 Their nightly dreams, their daily thoughts repeat,
 And pulses high with fancy'd glories beat.
 So, griev'd to view the Marathonian spoils,
 The young Themistocles vow'd equal toils ;
 Did then his schemes of future honours draw
 From the long triumphs which with tears he saw.

How shall I your unrival'd worth proclaim,
 Lost in the spreading circle of your fame !
 We saw you the great William's praise rehearse,
 And paint Britannia's joys in Roman verse.
 We heard at distance, soft enchanting strains,
 From blooming mountains, and Italian plains.
 Virgil began in English dress to shine,
 His voice, his looks, his grandeur still divine :
 From him too soon unfriendly you withdrew,
 But brought the tuneful Ovid to our view.
 Then the delightful theme of ev'ry tongue,
 Th' immortal Marlborough was your darling song.
 From clime to clime the mighty victor flew,
 From clime to clime as swiftly you pursue.
 Still with the hero's glow'd the poet's flame,
 Still with his conquests you enlarg'd your fame.

With boundless raptures here the muse could swell,
 And on your Rosamond for ever dwell :
 There opening sweets, and ev'ry fragrant flow'r
 Luxuriant smile, a never-fading bow'r !
 Next, human follies kindly to expose,
 You change from numbers, but not sink in prose :
 Whether in visionary scenes you play,
 Refine our tastes, or laugh our crimes away.
 Now, by the buskin'd muse you shine confess'd,
 The patriot kindles in the poet's breast.
 Such energy of sense might pleasure raise,
 Tho' unembellish'd with the charms of phrase :
 Such charms of phrase would with success be crown'd,
 Tho' nonsense flow'd in the melodious sound.
 The chastest virgin needs no blushes fear,
 The learn'd themselves not uninstructed, hear.
 The libertine, in pleasures us'd to roll,
 And idly sport with an immortal soul,
 Here comes, and by the virtuous heathen taught,
 Turns pale, and trembles at the dreadful thought.
 Whene'er you traverse vast Numidia's plains,
 What sluggish Briton in his isle remains !
 When Juba seeks the tiger with delight,
 We beat the thicket, and provoke the fight ;
 By the description warm'd, we fondly sweat,
 And in the chilling east wind pant with heat.
 What eyes behold not, how the stream refines,
 'Till by degrees the floating mirror shines ?
 While hurricanes in circling eddies play,
 Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away,
 We shrink with horror, and confess our fear,
 And all the sudden sounding ruin hear.
 When royal robes, distain'd with blood, deceive,
 And make poor Marcia beautifully grieve ;
 When she her secret thoughts no more conceals,
 Forgets the woman, and her flame reveals ;
 Well may the prince exult with noble pride,
 Not for his Libyan crown, but Roman bride.
 But I in vain on single features dwell,
 While all the parts of the fair piece excel.
 So rich the store, so dubious is the feast,
 We know not which to pass, or which to taste.

The shining incidents so justly fall,
 We may the whole new scenes of transport call.
 Thus jewellers confound our wand'ring eyes,
 And with variety of gems surprise.
 Here sapphires, here the Sardinian stone is seen,
 The topaz yellow, and the jasper green.
 The costly brilliant there, confus'dly bright,
 From num'rous surfaces darts trembling light:
 The diff'rent colours mingle in a blaze,
 Silent we stand, unable where to praise,
 In pleasure sweetly lost ten thousand ways.

*Trinity-College,
 Cambridge.*

L. EUSDEN.

TOO long hath love engross'd Britannia's stage,
 And sung to softness all our tragic rage:
 By that alone did empires fall or rise,
 And fate depended on a fair one's eyes:
 The sweet infection, mix'd with dang'rous art,
 Debas'd our manhood, while it sooth'd the heart.
 You scorn to raise a grief thyself must blame,
 Nor from our weakness steal a vulgar fame;
 A patriot's fall must justly melt the mind,
 And tears flow nobly, shed for all mankind.

How do our souls with gen'rous pleasure glow!
 Our hearts exulting, while our eyes o'erflow,
 When thy firm hero stands beneath the weight
 Of all his suff'rings, venerably great;
 Rome's poor remains still shelt'ring by his side,
 With conscious virtue, and becoming pride.

The aged oak thus rears his head in air,
 His sap exhausted, and his branches bare;
 'Midst storms and earthquakes he maintains his state,
 Fixt deep in earth, and fasten'd by his weight:
 His naked boughs still lend the shepherds aid,
 And his old trunk projects an awful shade.

Amidst the joys triumphant peace bestows,
 Our patriots sadden at his glorious woes;
 A while they let the world's great bus'ness wait,
 Anxious for Rome, and sigh for Cato's fate.
 Here taught how ancient heroes rose to fame,
 Our Britons crowd, and catch the Roman flame:

Where

Where states and senates well might lend an ear,
And kings and priests without a blush appear.

France boasts no more, but, fearful to engage,
Now first pays homage to her rival's stage;
Hastes to learn thee, and learning shall submit,
Alike to British arms, and British wit:
No more she'll wonder, (forc'd to do us right,)
Who think like Romans, could like Romans fight.

Thy Oxford smiles this glorious work to see,
And fondly triumphs in a son like thee.
The senates, consuls, and the gods of Rome,
Like old acquaintance at their native home,
In thee we find: each deed, each word express'd,
And ev'ry thought that swell'd a Roman breast.
We trace each hint that could thy soul inspire,
With Virgil's judgment, and with Lucan's fire:
We know thy worth, and give us leave to boast,
We most admire, because we know thee most.

Queen's-College, Oxon.

THO. TICKELL.

S I R,
WHEN your gen'rous labour first I view'd,
And Cato's hands in his own blood imbru'd,
That scene of death so terrible appears,
My soul could only thank you with her tears.
Yet with such wondrous art your skilful hand
Does all the passions of the soul command,
That ev'n my grief to praise and wonder turn'd,
And envy'd the great death which first I mourn'd.

What pen, but yours, could draw the doubtful strife
Of honour struggling with the love of life?
Describe the patriot, obstinately good,
As hov'ring o'er eternity he stood:
The wide, th'unbounded ocean lay before
His piercing sight, and Heav'n the distant shore,
Secure of endless bliss, with fearful eyes,
He grasps the dagger, and its point defies,
And rushes out of life to snatch the glorious prize. }

How would old Rome rejoice to hear you tell
How just her patriot liv'd, how great he fell!
Recount his wondrous probity and truth,
And form new Juba's in the British youth.

Their

Their gen'rous souls, when he resigns his breath,
 Are pleas'd with ruin, and in love with death;
 And when her conqu'ring sword Britannia draws,
 Resolves to perish, or defend her cause.
 Now first on Albion's theatre we see
 A perfect image of what man shou'd be;
 The glorious character is now exprest,
 Of virtue dwelling in a human breast,
 Drawn at full length by your immortal lines,
 In Cato's soul, as in her Heav'n she shines.

All-Souls-College, Oxon.

DIGBY COTES.

THE mind to virtue is by verse subdu'd;
 And the true poet is a public good.
 This Britain feels, while, by your lines inspir'd,
 Her free-born sons to glorious thoughts are fir'd.
 In Rome had you espous'd the vanquish'd cause,
 Inflam'd her senate, and upheld her laws;
 Your manly scenes had liberty restor'd,
 And giv'n the just success to Cato's sword:
 O'er Cæsar's arms your genius had prevail'd;
 And the muse triumph'd where the patriot fail'd.

AMB. PHILIPS.

Left with the Printer by an unknown hand.

NOW we may speak, since Cato speaks no more;
 'Tis praise at length, 'twas rapture all before;
 When crowded theatres with Iö's rung
 Sent to the skies, from whence thy genius sprung;
 Ev'n civil rage a while in thine was lost,
 And factions strove but to applaud thee most;
 Nor could enjoyment pall our longing taste,
 But ev'ry night was dearer than the last.

As when old Rome, in a malignant hour
 Depriv'd of some returning conqueror,
 Her debt of triumph to the dead discharg'd,
 For fame, for treasure, and her bounds enlarg'd;
 And while his godlike figure mov'd along,
 Alternate passions fir'd the adoring throng;
 Tears flow'd from ev'ry eye, and shouts from ev'ry
 tongue;

}
 Se

So in thy pompous lines has Cato far'd,
 Grac'd with an ample, though a late reward :
 A greater victor we in him revere ;
 A nobler triumph crowns his image here.

With wonder, as with pleasure, we survey
 A theme so scanty wrought into a play ;
 So vast a pile on such foundations plac'd ;
 Like Ammon's temple rear'd on Lybia's waste :
 Behold its glowing paint ! its easy weight !
 Its nice proportions ! and stupendous height !
 How chaste the conduct ! How divine the rage !
 A Roman worthy, on a Grecian stage !

But where shall Cato's praise begin or end ;
 Inclined to melt, and yet untaught to bend,
 The firmest patriot, and the gentlest friend ?
 How great his genius when the traitor crowd
 Ready to strike the blow their fury vow'd ;
 Quell'd by his look, and list'ning to his lore,
 Learn'd, like his passions, to rebel no more !
 When, lavish of his boiling blood, to prove
 The cure of slavish life, and slighted love,
 Brave Marcus new in early death appears,
 While Cato counts his wounds, and not his years ;
 Who checking private grief, the public mourns,
 Commands the pity he so greatly scorns.
 But when he strikes (to crown his gen'rous part)
 That honest, staunch, impracticable heart ;
 No tears, no sobs pursue his panting breath ;
 The dying Roman flames the pomp of death.

O sacred freedom, which the pow'rs bestow
 To season blessings, and to soften woe ;
 Plant of our growth, and aim of all our cares,
 The toil of ages, and the crown of wars :
 If, taught by thee, the poet's wit has flow'd
 In strains as precious as his hero's blood ;
 Preserve those strains, an everlasting charm
 To keep that blood and thy remembrance warm :
 Be this thy guardian image still secure,
 In vain shall force invade, or fraud allure ;
 Our great Palladium shall perform its part,
 Fix'd and enshrin'd in ev'ry British heart.

To her Royal Highness the
PRINCESS OF WALES,

With the Tragedy of CATO, Nov. 1714.

THE muse that oft, with sacred raptures fir'd,
 Has gen'rous thoughts of liberty inspir'd,
 And, boldly rising for Britannia's laws,
 Engag'd great Cato in her country's cause,
 On you submissive waits, with hopes assur'd,
 By whom the mighty blessing stands secur'd,
 And all the glories that our age adorn,
 Are promis'd to a people yet unborn.
 No longer shall the widow'd land bemoan
 A broken lineage, and a doubtful throne;
 But boast her royal progeny's increase,
 And count the pledges of her future peace.
 Oh, born to strengthen, and to grace our isle,
 While you, fair princess, in your offspring smile,
 Supplying charms to the succeeding age,
 Each heav'nly daughter's triumphs we presage:
 Already see th' illustrious youths complain,
 And pity monarchs doom'd to fight in vain.
 Thou too, the darling of our fond desires,
 Whom Albion, opening wide her arms requires,
 With manly valour and attractive air
 Shalt quell the fierce, and captivate the fair.
 Oh, England's younger hope! in whom conspire
 The mother's sweetness and the father's fire,
 For thee, perhaps, ev'n now of kingly race
 Some dawning beauty blooms in ev'ry grace,
 Some Carolina, to Heaven's dictates true,
 Who, while the scepter'd rivals vainly sue,
 Thy inborn worth with conscious eyes shall see,
 And slight th' imperial diadem for thee.
 Pleas'd with the prospect of successive reigns,
 The tuneful tribe no more in daring strains,

Shall vindicate, with pious fears oppress,
 Endanger'd rights and liberty distress:
 To milder sounds each muse shall tune the lyre,
 And gratitude, and faith to kings inspire,
 And filial love; bid impious discord cease,
 And sooth the madding factions into peace;
 Or rise ambitious in more lofty lays,
 And teach the nation their new monarch's praise,
 Describe his awful look, and godlike mind,
 And Cæsar's power with Cato's virtue join'd.
 Mean while, bright princess, who with graceful ease
 And native majesty art form'd to please,
 Behold those arts with a propitious eye,
 That suppliant to their great protectress fly;
 Then shall they triumph, and the British stage
 Improve her manners, and refine her rage,
 More noble characters expose to view,
 And draw her finish'd heroines from you.
 Nor you the kind indulgence will refuse,
 Skill'd in the labours of the deathless muse:
 The deathless muse with undiminish'd rays
 Through distant times the lovely dame conveys:
 To Gloriana Waller's harp was strung;
 The queen still shines, because the poet sung.
 Even all those graces in your frame combin'd,
 The common fate of mortal charms may find;
 (Content our short-liv'd praises to engage,
 The joy and wonder of a single age,)
 Unless some poet in a lasting song
 To late posterity their fame prolong,
 Instruct our sons the radiant form to prize,
 And see your beauty with their father's eyes.

P R O L O G U E.

Written by Mr. P O P E.

TO wake the soul by tender strokes of art,
 To raise the genius, and to mend the heart,
 To make mankind in conscious virtue bold,
 Live o'er each scene, and be what they behold:
 For this the tragic muse first trod the stage,
 Commanding tears to stream through every age;
 Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,
 And foes to virtue wonder'd how they wept.
 Our author shuns by vulgar springs to move
 The hero's glory or the virgin's love;
 In pitying love we but our weakness show,
 And wild ambition well deserves its woe.
 Here tears shall flow from a more gen'rous cause,
 Such tears as patriots shed for dying laws:
 He bids your breasts with antient ardour rise,
 And calls forth Roman drops from British eyes.
 Virtue confess'd in human shape he draws,
 What Plato thought, and God-like Cato was:
 No common object to your sight displays,
 But what with pleasure Heav'n itself surveys;
 A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
 And greatly falling in a falling state!
 While Cato gives his little senate laws,
 What bosom beats not in his country's cause?
 Who sees him act, but envies ev'ry deed?
 Who hears him groan, and does not wish to bleed?
 Ev'n when proud Cæsar, 'midst triumphal cars,
 The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,
 Ignobly vain, and impotently great,
 Shew'd Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state;
 As her dead father's rev'rend image past,
 The pomp was darken'd, and the day o'ercast,
 The triumph ceas'd—tears gush'd from ev'ry eye,
 The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by;
 Her last good man dejected Rome ador'd,
 And honour'd Cæsar's, less than Cato's sword.

*Britons attend: Be worth like this approv'd,
 And shew you have the virtue to be mov'd.
 With honest scorn the first fam'd Cato view'd
 Rome learning arts from Greece, whom she subdu'd;
 Our scenes precariously subsist too long
 On French translation and Italian song:
 Dare to have sense yourselves; assert the stage;
 Be justly warm'd with your own native rage:
 Such plays alone should please a British ear,
 As Cato's self had not disdain'd to hear.*

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

<i>Cato,</i>		Mr. Sheridan.
<i>Lucius,</i>	} Senators,	{ Mr. L'Estrange.
<i>Sempronius,</i>		{ Mr. Clarke.
<i>Juba,</i>	Prince of Numidia,	Mr. Wroughton.
<i>Syphax,</i>	General of the Numidians,	Mr. Hull.
<i>Portius,</i>	} Sons of Cato,	{ Mr. Aickin.
<i>Marcus,</i>		{ Mr. Lewis.
<i>Decius,</i>	Ambassador from Cæsar,	Mr. Fearon.
	Mutineers, Guards, &c.	

W O M E N.

<i>Marcia,</i>	Daughter to Cato,	Mrs. Hartley.
<i>Lucia,</i>	Daughter to Lucius,	Mrs. Jackson.

SCENE, A large Hall in the Governor's Palace
 of Utica.

C A T O.

C A T O.

A C T I.

Enter Portius and Marcus.

PORTIUS.

THE dawn is over-cast, the morning low'rs,
 And heavily in clouds brings on the day,
 The great, th'important day, big with the fate
 Of Cato and of Rome——our father's death
 Would fill up all the guilt of civil war,
 And close the scene of blood. Already Cæsar
 Has ravag'd more than half the globe, and sees
 Mankind grown thin by his destructive sword:
 Should he go farther, numbers would be wanting
 To form new battles, and support his crimes.
 Ye gods, what havock does ambition make
 Among your works!

Marc. Thy steady temper, Portius,
 Can look on guilt, rebellion, fraud and Cæsar,
 In the calm lights of mild philosophy;
 I'm tortur'd, ev'n to madness, when I think
 On the proud victor: ev'ry time he's nam'd
 Pharsalia rises to my view!—I see
 Th'insulting tyrant prancing o'er the field,
 Strew'd with Rome's citizens, and drench'd in slaughter,
 His horse's hoofs wet with patrician blood!
 Oh, Portius! is there not some chosen curse,
 Some hidden thunder in the stores of Heav'n,
 Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man
 Who owes his greatness to his country's ruin?

Por. Believe me, Marcus, 'tis an impious greatness,
 And mix'd with too much horror to be envy'd;
 How does the lustre of our father's actions,
 Through the dark cloud of ills that cover him,

Break out, and burn with more triumphant brightness !
 His suff'rings shine, and spread a glory round him ;
 Greatly unfortunate, he fights the cause
 Of honour, virtue, liberty, and Rome.
 His sword ne'er fell, but on the guilty head ;
 Oppression, tyranny, and pow'r usurp'd,
 Draw all the vengeance of his arm upon 'em.

Marc. Who knows not this ? But what can Cato do
 Against a world, a base, degen'rate world,
 That courts the yoke, and bows the neck to Cæsar ?
 Pent up in Utica, he vainly forms
 A poor epitome of Roman greatness,
 And, cover'd with Numidian guards, directs
 A feeble army, and an empty senate,
 Remnants of mighty battles fought in vain.
 By Heav'n, such virtues, join'd with such success,
 Distracts my very soul : our father's fortune
 Would almost tempt us to renounce his precepts.

Por. Remember what our father oft has told us :
 The ways of Heav'n are dark and intricate,
 Puzzled in mazes, and perplex'd with errors,
 Our understanding traces them in vain,
 Lost and bewilder'd in the fruitless search ;
 Nor sees with how much art the windings run,
 Nor where the regular confusion ends.

Marc. These are suggestions of a mind at ease :
 Oh, Portius, didst thou taste but half the griefs
 That wring my soul, thou couldst not talk thus coldly.
 Passion unpitied, and successless love,
 Plant daggers in my heart, and aggravate
 My other griefs. Were but my Lucia kind—

Por. Thou seest not that thy brother is thy rival ;
 But I must hide it, for I know thy temper. [*Aside.*]
 Now, Marcus, now, thy virtue's on the proof :
 Put forth thy utmost strength, work ev'ry nerve,
 And call up all thy father in thy soul :
 To quell the tyrant, love, and guard thy heart
 On this weak side, where most our nature fails,
 Would be a conquest worthy Cato's son.

Marc. Portius, the counsel which I cannot take,
 Instead of healing, but upbraids my weakness.
 Bid me for honour plunge into a war

Of thickest foes, and rush on certain death,
 Then shalt thou see that Marcus is not slow
 To follow glory, and confess his father.
 Love is not to be reason'd down, or lost
 In high ambition, or a thirst of greatness;
 'Tis second life, it grows into the soul,
 Warms ev'ry vein, and beats in ev'ry pulse,
 I feel it here: my resolution melts——

Por. Behold young Juba, the Numidian prince,
 With how much care he forms himself to glory,
 And breaks the fierceness of his native temper,
 To copy out our father's bright example.
 He loves our sister Marcia, greatly loves her;
 ' His eyes, his looks, his actions, all betray it;
 But still the smother'd fondness burns within him;
 ' When most it swells, and labours for a vent,
 The sense of honour, and desire of fame
 Drive the big passion back into his heart.
 What! shall an African, shall Juba's heir
 Reproach great Cato's son, and shew the world
 A virtue wanting in a Roman soul!

Marc. Portius, no more! your words leave stings behind 'em.

Whene'er did Juba, or did Portius, shew
 A virtue that has cast me at a distance,
 And thrown me out in the pursuits of honour?

Por. Marcus, I know thy gen'rous temper well;
 Fling but th' appearance of dishonour on it,
 It straight takes fire, and mounts into a blaze.

Marc. A brother's sufferings claim a brother's pity.

Por. Heav'n knows I pity thee. Behold my eyes
 Ev'n whilst I speak—do they not swim in tears?
 Were but my heart as naked to thy view,
 Marcus would see it bleed in his behalf.

Marc. Why then dost treat me with rebukes, instead
 Of kind condoling cares, and friendly sorrow?

Por. Oh, Marcus! did I know the way to ease
 Thy troubled heart, and mitigate thy pains,
 Marcus, believe me, I could die to do it.

Marc. Thou best of brothers, and thou best of friends!
 Pardon a weak, distemper'd soul, that swells
 With sudden gusts, and sinks as soon in calms,

The sport of passions. But Sempronius comes :
He must not find this softness hanging on me. [*Ex. Mar.*

Enter Sempronius.

Sem. Conspiracies no sooner should be form'd
Than executed. What means Portius here ?
I like not that cold youth. I must dissemble,
And speak a language foreign to my heart. [*Aside.*
Good-morrow, Portius ; let us once embrace,
Once more embrace, while yet we both are free.
To-morrow, should we thus express our friendship,
Each might receive a slave into his arms.
This sun, perhaps, this morning sun's the last,
That e'er shall rise on Roman liberty.

Por. My father has this morning call'd together
To this poor hall, his little Roman senate,
(The leavings of Pharsalia) to consult
If he can yet oppose the mighty torrent
That bears down Rome, and all her gods before it,
Or must at length give up the world to Cæsar.

Sem. Not all the pomp and majesty of Rome
Can raise her senate more than Cato's presence.
His virtues render our assembly awful,
They strike with something like religious fear,
And make ev'n Cæsar tremble at the head
Of armies flush'd with conquest. Oh, my Portius,
Could I but call that wond'rous man my father,
Would but thy sister Marcia be propitious
To thy friend's vows, I might be blest'd indeed !

Por. Alas, Sempronius ! wouldst thou talk of love
To Marcia, whilst her father's life's in danger ;
Thou might'st as well court the pale, trembling vestal,
When she beholds the holy flame expiring.

Sem. The more I see the wonders of thy race,
The more I'm charm'd. Thou must take heed, my
The world has all its eyes on Cato's son ; [*Portius ;*
Thy father's merit sets thee up to view,
And shews thee in the fairest point of light,
To make thy virtues or thy faults conspicuous.

Por. Well dost thou seem to check my ling'ring here
On this important hour—I'll straight away,
And while the fathers of the senate meet
In close debate, to weigh th' events of war,

I'll animate the soldiers' drooping courage
 With love of freedom, and contempt of life ;
 I'll thunder in their ears their country's cause,
 And try to rouse up all that's Roman in 'em.
 'Tis not in mortals to command success,
 But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it. [*Exit.*

Sem. Curse on the stripling ! how he apes his fire ?
 Ambitiously sententious—But I wonder
 Old Syphax comes not ; his Numidian genius
 Is well dispos'd to mischief, were he prompt
 And eager on it ; but he must be spurr'd,
 And ev'ry moment quicken'd to the course.
 —Cato has us'd me ill : he has refus'd
 His daughter Marcia to my ardent vows.
 Besides, his baffled arms, and ruin'd cause,
 Are bars to my ambition. Cæsar's favour,
 That show'rs down greatness on his friends, will raise me
 To Rome's first honours. If I give up Cato,
 I claim, in my reward, his captive daughter.
 But Syphax comes——

Enter Syphax.

Sy. Sempronius, all is ready ;
 I've founded my Numidians, man by man,
 And find them ripe for a revolt : they all
 Complain aloud of Cato's discipline,
 And wait but the command to change their master.

Sem. Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to waste ;
 Ev'n while we speak our conqueror comes on,
 And gathers ground upon us ev'ry moment.
 Alas ! thou know'st not Cæsar's active soul,
 With what a dreadful course he rushes on
 From war to war. In vain has nature form'd
 Mountains and oceans to oppose his passage ;
 He bounds o'er all ; victorious in his march,
 The Alps and Pyreneans sink before him ;
 Through winds and waves, and storms he works his way,
 Impatient for the battle ; one day more
 Will set the victor thund'ring at our gates.
 But, tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba ?
 That still would recommend thee more to Cæsar,
 And challenge better terms.

Sy. Alas, he's lost !

He's

He's lost, Sempronius ; all his thoughts are full
Of Cato's virtues—But I'll try once more,
(For ev'ry instant I expect him here)
If yet I can subdue those stubborn principles
Of faith and honour, and I know not what,
That have corrupted his Numidian temper,
And struck th' infection into all his soul.

Sem. Be sure to press upon him ev'ry motive.
Juba's surrender, since his father's death,
Would give up Africk into Cæsar's hands,
And make him lord of half the burning zone.

Sy. But is it true, Sempronius, that your senate
Is call'd together ? Gods ! thou must be cautious ;
Cato has piercing eyes, and will discern
Our frauds, unless they're cover'd thick with art.

Sem. Let me alone, good Syphax, I'll conceal
My thoughts in passion, ('tis the surest way ;)
I'll bellow out for Rome, and for my country,
And mouthe at Cæsar, 'till I shake the senate.
Your cold hypocrisy's a stale device,
A worn-out trick : wouldst thou be thought in earnest,
Cloath thy feign'd zeal in rage, in fire, in fury !

Sy. In troth, thou'rt able to instruct grey hairs,
And teach the wily African deceit.

Sem. Once more be sure to try thy skill on Juba.
Mean while I'll hasten to my Roman soldiers,
Inflame the mutiny, and underhand
Blow up their discontents, 'till they break out
Unlook'd for, and discharge themselves on Cato.
Remember, Syphax, we must work in haste :
Oh, think what anxious moments pass between
The birth of plots, and their last fatal periods.
Oh, 'tis a dreadful interval of time,
Fill'd up with horror all, and big with death !
Destruction hangs on ev'ry word we speak,
On ev'ry thought, 'till the concluding stroke
Determines all, and closes our design. [Exit.

Sy. I'll try if yet I can reduce to reason
This headstrong youth, and make him spurn at Cato.
The time is short ; Cæsar comes rushing on us—
But hold ! young Juba sees me, and approaches.

Enter Juba.

Jub. Syphax, I joy to meet thee thus alone.
I have observ'd of late thy looks are fall'n,
O'ercast with gloomy cares and discontent;
Then tell me, Syphax, I conjure thee, tell me,
What are the thoughts that knit thy brow in frowns,
And turn thine eye thus coldly on thy prince?

Sy. 'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts,
Or carry smiles and sunshine in my face,
When discontent sits heavy at my heart;
I have not yet so much the Roman in me.

Jub. Why dost thou cast out such ungen'rous terms
Against the lords and sov'reigns of the world?
Dost thou not see mankind fall down before them,
And own the force of their superior virtue?
Is there a nation in the wilds of Afric,
Amidst our barren rocks, and burning sands,
That does not tremble at the Roman name?

Sy. Gods! where's the worth that sets these people up
Above her own Numidia's tawny sons?
Do they with tougher sinews bend the bow?
Or flies the jav'lin swifter to its mark,
Launch'd from the vigour of a Roman arm?
Who like our active African instructs
The fiery steed, and trains him to his hand?
Or guides in troops th' embattled elephant,
Laden with war? These, these are arts, my prince,
In which your Zama does not stoop to Rome.

Jub. These all are virtues of a meaner rank;
Perfections that are plac'd in bones and nerves.
A Roman soul is bent on higher views:
To civilize the rude, unpolish'd world,
And lay it under the restraint of laws;
To make man mild, and sociable to man;
To cultivate the wild, licentious savage,
With wisdom, discipline, and lib'ral arts;
The embellishments of life: virtues like these
Make human nature shine, reform the soul,
And break our fierce barbarians into men.

Sy. Patience, kind Heav'ns!—excuse an old man's
warmth.

What are these wond'rous civilizing arts,

This

This Roman polish, and this smooth behaviour,
 That renders man thus tractable and tame?
 Are they not only to disguise our passions,
 To set our looks at variance with our thoughts,
 To check the starts and fallies of the soul,
 And break off all its commerce with the tongue:
 In short, to change us into other creatures
 Than what our nature and the gods design'd us?

Jub. To strike thee dumb: turn up thy eyes to Cato;
 There may'st thou see to what a god-like height
 The Roman virtues lift up mortal man,
 While good, and just, and anxious for his friends,
 He's still severely bent against himself;
 ' Renouncing sleep, and rest, and food, and ease,
 ' He strives with thirst and hunger, toil and heat,'
 And when his fortune sets before him all
 The pomps and pleasures that his soul can wish,
 His rigid virtue will accept of none.

Syph. Believe me, prince, there's not an African
 That traverses our vast Numidian deserts
 In quest of prey, and lives upon his bow,
 But better practises these boasted virtues.
 Coarse are his meals, the fortune of the chace,
 Amidst the running stream he flakes his thirst,
 Toils all the day, and at th' approach of night,
 On the first friendly bank he throws him down,
 Or rests his head upon a rock 'till morn;
 Then rises fresh, pursues his wonted game,
 And if the following day he chance to find
 A new repast, or an untasted spring,
 Blesses his stars and thinks it luxury.

Jub. Thy prejudices, Syphax, won't discern
 What virtues grow from ignorance and choice,
 Nor how the hero differs from the brute.
 ' But grant that others could with equal glory
 ' Look down on pleasures, and the baits of sense,'
 Where shall we find the man that bears affliction,
 Great and majestic in his griefs, like Cato?
 ' Heav'ns! with what strength, what steadiness of mind.
 ' He triumphs in the midst of all his suff'rings!'
 How does he rise against a load of woes,
 And thank the gods that throw the weight upon him!

Syph.

Syph. 'Tis pride, rank pride, and haughtiness of soul;
I think the Romans call it Stoicism.
Had not your royal father thought so highly
Of Roman virtue, and of Cato's cause,
He had not fall'n by a slave's hand inglorious:
Nor would his slaughter'd army now have lain
On Afric sands, disfigur'd with their wounds,
To gorge the wolves and vultures of Numidia.

Jub. Why dost thou call my sorrows up afresh?
My father's name brings tears into my eyes.

Syph. Oh, that you'd profit by your father's ills!

Jub. What wouldst thou have me do?

Syph. Abandon Cato.

Jub. Syphax, I shou'd be more than twice an orphan
By such a loss.

Syph. Aye, there's the tie that binds you!
You long to call him father. Marcia's charms
Work in your heart unseen, and plead for Cato.
No wonder you are deaf to all I say.

Jub. Syphax, your zeal becomes importunate;
I've hitherto permitted it to rave,
And talk at large; but learn to keep it in,
Lest it should take more freedom than I'll give it.

Syph. Sir, your great father never us'd me thus.
Alas, he's dead! but can you e'er forget
The tender sorrows, and the pangs of nature,
'The fond embraces, and repeated blessings,'
Which you drew from him in your last farewell?
Still must I cherish the dear, sad remembrance,
At once to torture and to please my soul.

The good old king at parting wrung my hand,
(His eyes brim-full of tears) then sighing, cry'd,
Pr'ythee be careful of my son! — His grief
Swell'd up so high, he could not utter more.

Jub. Alas! thy story melts away my soul;
That best of fathers! how shall I discharge
The gratitude and duty which I owe him?

Sy. By laying up his counsels in your heart.

Jub. His counsels bade me yield to thy directions:
Then, Syphax, chide me in severest terms,
Vent all thy passion, and I'll stand its shock,

Calm

Calm and unruffled as a summer sea,
When not breath of wind flies o'er its surface.

Sy. Alas! my prince, I'd guide you to your safety.

Jub. I do believe thou wouldst; but tell me how?

Sy. Fly from the fate that follows Cæsar's foes.

Jub. My father scorn'd to do it.

Sy. And therefore dy'd.

Jub. Better to die ten thousand thousand deaths,
Than wound my honour.

Sy. Rather say your love.

Jub. Syphax, I've promis'd to preserve my temper.
Why wilt thou urge me to confess a flame
I long have stifled, and would fain conceal?

Sy. Believe me, prince, tho' hard to conquer love,
'Tis easy to divert and break its force.

Absence might cure it, or a second mistress
Light up another flame, and put out this.

The glowing dames of Zama's royal court
Have faces flush'd with more exalted charms;
The sun that rolls his chariot o'er their heads,
Works up more fire and colour in their cheeks;
Were you with these, my prince, you'd soon forget
The pale, unripen'd beauties of the North.

Jub. 'Tis not a set of features, or complexion,
The tincture of a skin, that I admire:
Beauty soon grows familiar to the lover,
Fades in his eye, and palls upon the sense.
The virtuous Marcia tow'rs above her sex:
True, she is fair, (Oh, how divinely fair!)
But still the lovely maid improves her charms
With inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,
And sanctity of manners; Cato's soul
Shines out in every thing she acts or speaks,
While winning mildness and attractive smiles
Dwell in her looks, and with becoming grace
Softens the rigour of her father's virtue.

Sy. How does your tongue grow wanton in her praise!
But on my knees I beg you would consider——

Jub. Hah! Syphax, is't not she?—She moves this
way:

And with her Lucia, Lucius's fair daughter.

My heart beats thick—I pr'ythee, Syphax, leave me.

Sy.

Sy. Ten thousand curses fasten on 'em both !
Now will this woman, with a single glance,
Undo what I've been lab'ring all this while.

[*Exit Syphax.*

Enter Marcia and Lucia.

Jub. Hail, charming maid ! How does thy beauty
smooth

The face of war, and make ev'n horror smile !
At sight of thee my heart shakes off its sorrows ;
I feel a dawn of joy break in upon me,
And for a while forget th' approach of Cæsar.

Mar. I should be griev'd, young prince, to think my
presence

Unbent your thoughts, and slacken'd 'em to arms,
While warm with slaughter, our victorious foe
Threatens aloud, and calls you to the field.

Jub. Oh, Marcia, let me hope thy kind concerns
And gentle wishes follow me to battle !
The thought will give new vigour to my arm,
Add strength and weight to my descending sword,
And drive it in a tempest on the foe.

Mar. My pray'rs and wishes always shall attend
The friends of Rome, the glorious cause of virtue,
And men approv'd of by the gods and Cato.

Jub. That Juba may deserve thy pious cares,
I'll gaze for ever on thy god-like father,
Transplanting, one by one, into my life,
His bright perfections, 'till I shine like him.

Mar. My father never at a time like this,
Would lay out his great soul in words, and waste
Such precious moments.

Jub. Thy reproofs are just,
Thou virtuous maid ; I'll hasten to my troops,
And fire their languid souls with Cato's virtue.
If e'er I lead them to the field, when all
The war shall stand rang'd in its just array,
And dreadful pomp ; then will I think on thee.
Oh, lovely maid ! then will I think on thee ;
And in the shock of charging hosts, remember
What glorious deeds should grace the man, who hopes
For Marcia's love.

[*Exit Juba.*

Luc. Marcia, you're too severe ;

How cou'd you chide the young good-natur'd prince
And drive him from you with so stern an air,
A prince that loves and doats on you to death?

Mar. 'Tis therefore, Lucia, that I chide him from me.
His air, his voice, his looks, and honest soul,
Speak all so movingly in his behalf,
I dare not trust myself to hear him talk.

Luc. Why will you fight against so sweet a passion,
And steel your heart to such a world of charms?

Mar. How, Lucia! wouldst thou have me sink away
In pleasing dreams, and lose myself in love,
When ev'ry moment Cato's life's at stake?
Cæsar comes arm'd with terror and revenge,
And aims his thunder at my father's head.
Should not the sad occasion swallow up
My other cares, 'and draw them all into it?'

Luc. Why have not I this constancy of mind,
Who have so many griefs to try its force?
Sure, nature form'd me of her softest mould,
Enfeebled all my soul with tender passions,
And sunk me ev'n below my own weak sex:
Pity and love, by turns, oppress my heart.

Mar. Lucia, disburthen all thy cares on me,
And let me share thy most retir'd distress.
Tell me who raises up this conflict in thee?

Luc. I need not blush to name them, when I tell thee
They're Marcia's brothers, and the sons of Cato.

Mar. They both behold thee with their sister's eyes,
And often have reveal'd their passion to me.

' But tell me, whose address thou fav'rest most?

' I long to know, and yet I dread to hear it.

' *Luc.* Which is it Marcia wishes for?

' *Mar.* For neither ——

' And yet for both — The youths have equal share

' In Marcia's wishes, and divide their sister:'

But tell me which of them is Lucia's choice?

' *Luc.* Marcia, they both are high in my esteem,

' But in my love — Why wilt thou make me name him!

' Thou know'st it is a blind and foolish passion,

' Pleas'd and disgusted with it knows not what —

' *Mar.* Oh, Lucia, I'm perplex'd, Oh, tell me which

' I must hereafter call my happy brother?'

Luc

Luc. Suppose 'twere Portius, could you blame my choice?

— Oh, Portius, thou hast stol'n away my soul!

' With what a graceful tenderness he loves!
' And breathes the softest, the sincerest vows!
' Complacency, and truth, and manly sweetness,
' Dwell ever on his tongue, and smooth his thoughts.'

Marcus is over-warm, his fond complaints
Have so much earnestness and passion in them,
I hear him with a secret kind of horror,
And tremble at his vehemence of temper.

Mar. Alas, poor youth! ' how canst you throw him
from thee?

' Lucia, thou know'st not half the love he bears thee?
' Whene'er he speaks of thee, his heart's in flames,
' He sends out all his soul in ev'ry word,
' And thinks, and talks, and looks like one transported.
' Unhappy youth!' How will thy coldness raise
Tempests and storms in his afflicted bosom!
I dread the consequence.

Luc. You seem to plead
Against your brother Portius.

Mar. Heav'n forbid!
Had Portius been the unsuccessful lover,
The same compassion would have fall'n on him.

Luc. Was ever virgin love distressed like mine!
Portius himself oft falls in tears before me,
As if he mourn'd his rival's ill success,
Then bids me hide the motions of my heart,
Nor shew which way it turns. So much he fears
The sad effects that it will have on Marcus.

' *Mar.* He knows too well how easily he's fir'd,
' And wou'd not plunge his brother in despair,
' But waits for happier times, and kinder moments.

' *Luc.* Alas, too late I find myself involv'd
' In endless griefs, and labyrinths of woe,
' Born to afflict my Marcia's family,
' And sow dissention in the hearts of brothers.
' Tormenting thought! it cuts into my soul.'

Mar. Let us not, Lucia, aggravate our sorrows,
But to the gods submit th' event of things.

Our lives, discolour'd with our present woes,
May still grow bright, and smile with happier hours.

So the pure limpid stream, when foul with stains
Of rushing torrents, and descending rains,
Works itself clear, and as it runs, refines,
'Till, by degrees, the floating mirror shines,
Reflects each flow'r that on the border grows,
And a new heav'n in its fair bosom shows.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *the Senate.*

Lucius, Sempronius, and Senators.

SEMPRONIUS.

ROME still survives in this assembled senate !
Let us remember we are Cato's friends,
And act like men who claim that glorious title.

Luc. Cato will soon be here, and open to us
Th' occasion of our meeting. Hark ! he comes !

[*A sound of trumpets.*]

May all the guardian gods of Rome direct him !

Enter Cato.

Cato. Fathers, we once again are met in council :
Cæsar's approach has summon'd us together,
And Rome attends her fate from our resolves.
How shall we treat this bold aspiring man ?
Success still follows him, and backs his crimes ;
Pharsalia gave him Rome, Egypt has since
Receiv'd his yoke, and the whole Nile is Cæsar's.
Why should I mention Juba's overthrow,
And Scipio's death ? Numidia's burning sands
Still smoke with blood. 'Tis time we should decree
What course to take. Our foe advances on us,
And envies us even Lybia's sultry desarts.
Fathers, pronounce your thoughts : are they still fix'd
To hold it out and fight it to the last ?
Or are your hearts subdu'd at length, and wrought
By time, and ill success, to a submission ?
Sempronius, speak.

Semp.

Semp. My voice is still for war.

Gods ! can a Roman senate long debate
Which of the two to choose, slav'ry or death !
No, let us rise at once, gird on our swords,
And at the head of our remaining troops,
Attack the foe, break through the thick array
Of his throng'd legions, and charge home upon him.
Perhaps some arm, more lucky than the rest,
May reach his heart, and free the world from bondage.
Rise, fathers, rise ! 'tis Rome demands your help :
Rise, and revenge her slaughter'd citizens,
Or share their fate ! The corps of half her senate
Manure the fields of Thessaly, while we
Sit here delib'rating in cold debates,
If we should sacrifice our lives to honour,
Or wear them out in servitude and chains.
Rouse up, for shame ! our brothers of Pharsalia
Point at their wounds, and cry aloud—To battle !
Great Pompey's shade complains that we are slow ;
And Scipio's ghost walks unreveng'd amongst us.

Cato. Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal
Transport thee thus beyond the bounds of reason :
True fortitude is seen in great exploits
That justice warrants, and that wisdom guides,
All else is tow'ring frenzy and distraction.
Are not the lives of those who draw the sword
In Rome's defence intrusted to our care ?
Should we thus lead them to a field of slaughter,
Might not th' impartial world with reason say,
We lavish'd at our deaths the blood of thousands,
To grace our fall, and make our ruin glorious ?
Lucius, we next would know what's your opinion.

Luc. My thoughts, I must confess, are turn'd on peace.
Already have our quarrels fill'd the world
With widows, and with orphans : Scythia mourns
Our guilty wars, and earth's remotest regions
Lie half unpeopled by the feuds of Rome :
'Tis time to sheath the sword, and spare mankind.
It is not Cæsar, but the gods, my fathers,
The gods declare against us, and repel
Our vain attempts. ' To urge the foe to battle,
' (Prompted by blind revenge and wild despair)

' Were to refuse th' awards of Providence,
 ' And not to rest in Heav'n's determination.
 Already have we shewn our love to Rome,
 Now let us shew submission to the gods.
 We took up arms, not to revenge ourselves,
 But free the commonwealth; when this end fails,
 Arms have no further use. Our country's cause,
 That drew our swords, now wrests 'em from our hands,
 And bids us not delight in Roman blood
 Unprofitably shed. What men could do,
 Is done already: heav'n and earth will witness,
 If Rome must fall, that we are innocent.
 ' *Semp.* This smooth discourse, and mild behaviour, oft
 ' Conceal a traitor——something whispers me
 ' All is not right—Cato, beware of Lucius.

‘ [*Aside to Cato.*

Cato. Let us appear nor rash nor diffident;
 Immod'rate valour swells into a fault;
 And fear admitted into public councils
 Betrays like treason. Let us shun 'em both.
 Fathers, I cannot see that our affairs
 Are grown thus desp'rate; we have bulwarks round us;
 Within our walls are troops inur'd to toil
 In Afric's heat, and season'd to the sun;
 Numidia's spacious kingdom lies behind us,
 Ready to rise at its young prince's call.
 While there is hope, do not distrust the gods:
 But wait at least 'till Cæsar's near approach
 Force us to yield. 'Twill never be too late
 To sue for chains, and own a conqueror.
 Why should Rome fall a moment ere her time?
 No, let us draw her term of freedom out
 In its full length, and spin it to the last,
 So shall we gay still one day's liberty:
 And let me perish, but in Cato's judgment,
 A day, an hour of virtuous liberty,
 Is worth a whole eternity in bondage.

Enter Marcus.

Mar. Fathers, this moment, as I watch'd the gate,
 Lodg'd on my post, a herald is arriv'd
 From Cæsar's camp, and with him comes old Decius,
 The

The Roman knight; he carries in his looks
Impatience, and demands to speak with Cato.

Cato. By your permission, fathers——bid him enter.

[*Exit Marcus.*]

Decius was once my friend, but other prospects
Have loos'd those ties, and bound him fast to Cæsar.
His message may determine our resolves.

Enter Decius.

Dec. Cæsar sends health to Cato—

Cat. Cou'd he send it

To Cato's slaughter'd friends, it would be welcome.
Are not your orders to address the senate?

Dec. My business is with Cato; Cæsar sees
The straits to which you are driven; and, as he knows
Cato's high worth, is anxious for your life.

Cato. My life is grafted on the fate of Rome.
Wou'd he save Cato, bid him spare his country.
Tell your dictator this; and tell him, Cato
Disdains a life, which he has power to offer.

Dec. Rome and her senators submit to Cæsar;
Her gen'als and her consuls are no more,
Who check'd his conquests, and deny'd his triumphs.
Why will not Cato be this Cæsar's friend?

Cato. Those very reasons thou hast urg'd, forbid it.

Dec. Cato, I've orders to expostulate,
And reason with you, as from friend to friend:
Think on the storm that gathers o'er your head,
And threatens ev'ry hour to burst upon it;
Still may you stand high in your country's honours,
Do but comply, and make your peace with Cæsar,
Rome will rejoice, and cast its eyes on Cato,
As on the second of mankind.

Cato. No more:
I must not think of life on such conditions.

Dec. Cæsar is well acquainted with your virtues,
And therefore sets this value on your life.
Let him but know the price of Cato's friendship,
And name your terms.

Cato. Bid him disband his legions,
Restore the commonwealth to liberty,
Submit his actions to the public censure,

And

And stand the judgment of a Roman senate.
 Bid him do this, and Cato is his friend.

Dec. Cato, the world talks loudly of your wisdom—

Cato. Nay, more, tho' Cato's voice was ne'er employ'd
 To clear the guilty, and to varnish crimes,
 Myself will mount the rostrum in his favour,
 And strive to gain his pardon from the people.

Dec. A style like this, becomes a conqueror.

Cato. Decius, a style, like this, becomes a Roman.

Dec. What is a Roman, that is Cæsar's foe?

Cato. Greater than Cæsar: he's a friend to virtue.

Dec. Consider, Cato, you're in Utica,
 And at the head of your own little senate;
 You don't now thunder in the capitol,
 With all the mouths of Rome to second you.

Cato. Let him consider that, who drives us hither?
 'Tis Cæsar's sword has made Rome's senate little,
 And thinn'd its ranks. Alas! thy dazzled eye
 Beholds this man in a false glaring light,
 Which conquest and success have thrown upon him;
 Did'st thou but view him right, thou'dst see him black
 With murder, treason, sacrilege, and crimes,
 That strike my soul with horror but to name 'em.
 I know thou look'st on me, as on a wretch
 Beset with ills, and cover'd with misfortunes;
 But, by the gods I swear, millions of worlds
 Shou'd never buy me to be like that Cæsar.

Dec. Does Cato send this answer back to Cæsar,
 For all his gen'rous cares and proffer'd friendship?

Cato. His cares for me are insolent and vain:
 Presumptuous man! the gods take care of Cato.
 Wou'd Cæsar shew the greatness of his soul,
 Bid him employ his care for these my friends,
 And make good use of his ill-gotten pow'r,
 By shelt'ring men much better than himself.

Dec. Your high unconquer'd heart makes you forget
 You are a man, You rush on your destruction.
 But I have done. When I relate hereafter
 The tale of this unhappy embassy,
 All Rome will be in tears.

[Exit Decius.]

Semp. Cato, we thank thee.
 The mighty genius of immortal Rome

Speaks

Speaks in thy voice ; thy soul breathes liberty.
Cæsar will shrink to hear the words thou utter'st,
And shudder in the midst of all his conquests.

Luc. The senate owns its gratitude to Cato,
Who with so great a soul consults its safety,
And guards our lives while he neglects his own.

Semp. Sempronius gives no thanks on this account.
Lucius seems fond of life ; but what is life ?
'Tis not to stalk about, and draw fresh air
From time to time, or gaze upon the sun ;
'Tis to be free. When liberty is gone,
Life grows insipid, and has lost its relish.
Oh, could my dying hand but lodge a sword
In Cæsar's bosom, and revenge my country !
By heav'n's I could enjoy the pangs of death,
And smile in agony.

Luc. Others, perhaps,
May serve their country with as warm a zeal,
Tho 'tis not kindled into so much rage.

Semp. This sober conduct is a mighty virtue
In lukewarm patriots.

Cato. Come ; no more, Sempronius,
All here are friends to Rome, and to each other.
Let us not weaken still the weaker side
By our divisions.

Semp. Cato, my resentments
Are sacrific'd to Rome—I stand reprov'd.

Cato. Fathers, 'tis time you come to a resolve.

Luc. Cato, we all go into your opinion,
Cæsar's behaviour has convinc'd the senate
We ought to hold it out till terms arrive.

Semp. We ought to hold it out 'till death ; but, Cato,
My private voice is drown'd amidst the senate's.

Cato. Then let us rise, my friends, and strive to fill
This little interval, this pause of life,
(While yet our liberty and fates are doubtful)
With resolution, friendship, Roman bravery,
And all the virtues we can crowd into it ;
That heav'n may say it ought to be prolong'd.
Fathers, farewell—The young Numidian prince
Comes forward, and expects to know our counsels.

[*Exeunt senators.*
Enter

Enter Juba.

Juba, the Roman senate has resolv'd,
Till time give better prospects, still to keep
The sword unsheath'd, and turn its edge on Cæsar.

Juba. The resolution fits a Roman senate.
But, Cato, lend me for a while thy patience,
And condescend to hear a young man speak.
My father, when some days before his death
He order'd me to march for Utica,
(Alas ! I thought not then his death so near !)
Wept o'er me, press'd me in his aged arms,
And, as his griefs gave way, My son, said he,
Whatever fortune shall befall thy father,
Be Cato's friend ; he'll train thee up to great
And virtuous deeds ; do but observe him well,
Thou'lt shun misfortunes, or thou'lt learn to bear 'em.

Cato. Juba, thy father was a worthy prince,
And merited, alas ! a better fate ;
But heav'n thought otherwise.

Jub. My father's fate,
In spite of all the fortitude that shines
Before my face in Cato's great example,
Subdues my soul, and fills my eyes with tears.

Cato. It is an honest sorrow, and becomes thee.

Jub. My father drew respect from foreign climes :
The kings of Afric sought him for their friend ;
' Kings far remote, that rule, as fame reports.
' Behind the hidden sources of the Nile,
' In distant worlds, on t'other sides the sun ;'
Oft have their black ambassadors appear'd,
Loaden with gifts, and fill'd the courts of Zama.

Cato. I am no stranger to thy father's greatness.

Jub. I would not boast the greatness of my father,
But point out new alliances to Cato.
Had we not better leave this Utica,
To arm Numidia in our cause, and court
Th' assistance of my father's powerful friends ;
Did they know Cato, our remotest kings
Would pour embattled multitudes about him ;
Their swarthy hosts would darken all our plains,
Doubling the native horror of the war,
And making death more grim.

Cato.

Cato. And canst thou think
Cato will fly before the sword of Cæsar !
Reduc'd, like Hannibal, to seek relief
From court to court, and wander up and down
A vagabond in Afric.

Jub. Cato, perhaps
I'm too officious ; but my forward cares
Wou'd fain preserve a life of so much value.
My heart is wounded, when I see such virtue
Afflicted by the weight of such misfortunes.

Cato. Thy nobleness of soul obliges me.
But know, young prince, that valour soars above
What the world calls misfortune and affliction.
These are not ills ; else would they never fall
On Heav'n's first fav'rites and the best of men.
The gods, in bounty, work up storms about us,
That give mankind occasion to exert
Their hidden strength, and throw out into practice
Virtues which shun the day, and lie conceal'd
In the smooth seasons and the calms of life.

Jub. I'm charm'd whene'er thou talk'st ; I pant for
virtue ;

And all my soul endeavours at perfection.

Cato. Dost thou love watchings, abstinence, and toil,
Laborious virtues all ? Learn them from Cato :
Success and fortune must thou learn from Cæsar.

Jub. The best good fortune that can fall on Juba,
The whole success at which my heart aspires,
Depends on Cato.

Cato. What does Juba say ?
Thy words confound me.

Jub. I would fain retract them,
Give 'em me back again : they aim'd at nothing.

Cato. Tell me thy wish, young prince ; make not my
A stranger to thy thoughts. [ear

Jub. Oh ! they're extravagant ;
Still let me hide them.

Cato. What can Juba ask
That Cato will refuse ?

Jub. I fear to name it.
Marcia—inherits all her father's virtues.

Cato. What wouldst thou say ?

Jub.

Jub. Cato, thou hast a daughter.

Cato. Adieu, young prince; I would not hear a word
Should lessen thee in my esteem. Remember
The hand of fate is over us, and Heav'n
Exacts severity from all our thoughts.
It is not now a time to talk of ought
But chains, or conquest; liberty, or death. [Exit.]

Enter Syphax.

Sy. How's this, my prince! What, cover'd with con-
You look as if yon stern philosopher [fusion?]
Had just now chid you.

Jub. Syphax, I'm undone!

Sy. I know it well.

Jub. Cato thinks meanly of me.

Sy. And so will all mankind.

Jub. I've open'd to him

The weakness of my soul, my love for Marcia.

Sy. Cato's a proper person to intrust
A love-tale with.

Jub. Oh, I could pierce my heart,
My foolish heart. Was ever wretch like Juba!

Sy. Alas, my prince, how are you chang'd of late!
I've know young Juba rise before the sun,
To beat the thicket where the tiger slept,
Or seek the lion in his dreadful haunts:
How did the colour mount into your cheeks,
When first you rous'd him to the chace! I've seen you,
Ev'n in the Lybian dog-days, hunt him down,
Then charge him close, provoke him to the rage
Of fangs and claws, and, stooping from your horse,
Rivet the panting savage to the ground.

Jub. Pr'ythee, no more.

Sy. How would the old king smile
To see you weigh the paws, when tipp'd with gold,
And throw the shaggy spoils about your shoulders!

Jub. Syphax, this old man's talk (tho' honey flow'd
In ev'ry word) wou'd now lose all its sweetness.
Cato's displeas'd, and Marcia lost for ever.

Sy. Young prince, I yet could give you good advice,
Marcia might still be yours.

Jub. What say'st thou, Syphax?

Sy. Heav'ns, thou turn'st me all into attention.

Sy. Marcia might still be yours.

Jub. As how, dear Syphax?

Sy. Juba commands Numidia's hardy troops,
Mounted on steeds unus'd to the restraint
Of curbs or bits, and fleetier than the winds.
Give but the word, we'll snatch this damsel up,
And bear her off.

Jub. Can such dishonest thoughts
Rise up in man? Wouldst thou seduce my youth
To do an act that would destroy my honour?

Sy. Gods, I could tear my hair to hear you talk!
Honour's a fine imaginary notion,
That draws in raw and unexperienc'd men
To real mischiefs, while they hunt a shadow.

Jub. Wouldst thou degrade thy prince into a ruffian?

Sy. The boasted ancestors of these great men,
Whose virtues you admire, were all such ruffians.
This dread of nations, this almighty Rome,
That comprehends in her wide empire's bounds
All under Heav'n, was founded on a rape;
Your Scipios, Cæsars, Pompeys, and your Catos,
(The gods on earth) are all the spurious brood
Of violated maids, of ravish'd Sabines.

Jub. Syphax, I fear that hoary head of thine
Abounds too much in our Numidian wiles.

Sy. Indeed, my prince, you want to know the world.
You have not read mankind; your youth admires
The throes and swellings of a Roman soul,
Cato's bold flights, th' extravagance of virtue.

Jub. If knowledge of the world makes man perfidious,
May Juba ever live in ignorance!

Sy. Go, go; you're young.

Jub. Gods, must I tamely bear
This arrogance unanswer'd! Thou'rt a traitor,
A false old traitor.

Sy. I have gone too far. [Aside.]

Jub. Cato shall know the baseness of thy soul.

Sy. I must appease this storm, or perish in it. [Aside.]
Young prince, behold these locks, that are grown white
Beneath a helmet in your father's battles.

Jub. Those locks shall ne'er protect thy insolence.

Sy. Must one rash word, th' infirmity of age,

D

Throw

Throw down the merit of my better years ?

This the reward of a whole life of service !

—Curse on the boy ! how steadily he hears me ! [*Aside.*

Jub. Is it because the throne of my forefathers
Still stands unfill'd, and that Numidia's crown
Hangs doubtful yet whose head it shall inclose,
Thou thus presum'st to treat thy prince with scorn ?

Sy. Why will you rive my heart with such expressions ?
Does not old Syphax follow you to war ?

What are his aims ? Why does he load with darts
His trembling hand, and crush beneath a casque
His wrinkled brows ? What is it he aspires to ?

Is it not this ? to shed the flow remains,
His last poor ebb of blood in your defence ?

Jub. Syphax, no more ! I would not hear you talk.

Sy. Not hear me talk ! what, when my faith to Juba,
My royal master's son, is call'd in question ?
My prince may strike me dead, and I'll be dumb ;
But whilst I live I must not hold my tongue,
And languish out old age in his displeasure.

Jub. Thou know'st the way too well into my heart,
I do believe thee loyal to thy prince.

Sy. What greater instance can I give ? I've offer'd
To do an action which my soul abhors,
And gain you whom you love, at any price.

Jub. Was this thy motive ? I have been too hasty.

Sy. And 'tis for this my prince has call'd me traitor.

Jub. Sure thou mistak'st ; I did not call thee so.

Sy. You did, indeed, my prince, you call'd me traitor.
Nay, further, threaten'd you'd complain to Cato.
Of what, my prince, would you complain to Cato ?
That Syphax loves you, and would sacrifice
His life, nay, more, his honour, in your service.

Jub. Syphax, I know thou lov'st me ; but indeed
Thy zeal for Juba carry'd thee too far.
Honour's a sacred tie, the law of kings,
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,
That aids and strengthens virtue where it meets her,
And imitates her actions where she is not :
It ought not to be sported with.

Sy. By Heav'n's,
I'm ravish'd when you talk thus, tho' you chide me !

Alas !

Alas ! I've hitherto been us'd to think
A blind official zeal to serve my king,
The ruling principle, that ought to burn
And quench all others in a subject's heart.

Happy the people who preserve their honour
By the same duties that oblige their prince ;

Jub. Syphax, thou now beginn'st to speak thyself.
Numidia's grown a scorn among the nations,
For breach of public vows. Our Punic faith
Is infamous, and branded to a proverb.

Syphax, we'll join our cares, to purge away
Our country's crimes, and clear her reputation.

Sy. Believe me, prince, you make old Syphax weep,
To hear you talk—but 'tis with tears of joy.
If e'er your father's crown adorn your brows,
Numidia will be blest by Cato's lectures.

Jub. Syphax, thy hand ; we'll mutually forget
The warmth of youth, and frowardness of age ;
Thy prince esteems thy worth, and loves thy person.
If e'er the scepter come into my hand,
Syphax shall stand the second in my kingdom.

Sy. Why will you overwhelm my age with kindness ?
My joy grows burdensome, I shan't support it.

Jub. Syphax, farewell. I'll hence, and try to find
Some blest occasion that may set me right
In Cato's thoughts. I'd rather have that man
Approve my deeds, than worlds for my admirers. [*Exit.*

Sy. Young men soon give, and soon forget affronts ;
Old age is slow in both—A false old traitor !—
These words, rash boy, may chance to cost thee dear.
My heart had still some foolish fondness for thee :
But hence ! 'tis gone : I give it to the winds :
Cæsar, I'm wholly thine.—

Enter Sempronius.

All hail, Sempronius !
Well, Cato's senate is resolv'd to wait
The fury of a siege before it yields.

Sem. Syphax, we both were on the verge of fate :
Lucius declar'd for peace, and terms were offer'd
To Cato, by a messenger from Cæsar.
Shou'd they submit ere our designs are ripe,

We both must perish in the common wreck,
Lost in the gen'ral undistinguish'd ruin.

Sy. But how stands Cato?

Sem. Thou hast seen mount Atlas:
Whilst storms and tempests thunder on its brows,
And oceans break their billows at its feet,
It stands unmov'd, and glories in its height:
Such is that haughty man; his tow'ring soul,
Midst all the shocks and injuries of fortune,
Rises superior, and looks down on Cæsar.

Sy. But what's this messenger?

Sem. I've practis'd with him,
And found a means to let the victor know
That Syphax and Sempronius are his friends.
But let me now examine in my turn:
Is Juba fix'd?

Sy. Yes—but it is to Cato.
I've try'd the force of ev'ry reason on him,
Sooth'd and caress'd; been angry, sooth'd again;
Laid safety, life, and int'rest in his fight.
But all are vain, he scorns them all for Cato.

Sem. Come, 'tis no matter; we shall do without him.
He'll make a pretty figure in a triumph,
And serve to trip before the victor's chariot.
Syphax, I now may hope thou hast forsook
Thy Juba's cause, and wishest Marcia mine.

Sy. May she be thine as fast as thou wouldst have her.

Sem. Syphax, I love that woman; tho' I curse
Her and myself, yet, spite of me, I love her.

Sy. Make Cato sure, and give up Utica,
Cæsar will ne'er refuse thee such a trifle.
But are thy troops prepar'd for a revolt?
Does the sedition catch from man to man,
And run among their ranks?

Sem. All, all is ready,
The factious leaders are our friends, that spread
Murmurs and discontents among the soldiers;
They count their toilsome marches, long fatigues,
Unusual fastings, and will bear no more
This medley of philosophy and war.
Within an hour they'll storm the senate-house.

Sy. Mean while I'll draw up my Numidian troops
Within

Within the square, to exercise their arms,
 And as I see occasion, favour thee.
 I laugh to think how your unshaken Cato
 Will look aghast, while unforeseen destruction
 Pours in upon him thus from every side.
 So, where our wide Numidian wastes extend,
 Sudden, th' impetuous hurricanes descend,
 Wheel through the air, in circling eddies play,
 Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away.
 The helpless traveller, with wild surprise
 Sees the dry desert all around him rise,
 And, smother'd in the dusty whirlwind, dies.

}
 [Exeunt.]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Enter Marcus and Portius.

MARCUS.

THANKS to my stars, I have not rang'd about
 The wilds of life, ere I could find a friend;
 Nature first pointed out my Portius to me,
 And early taught me, by her secret force,
 To love thy person, ere I knew thy merit,
 Till what was instinct, grew up into friendship.

Por. Marcus, the friendships of the world are oft
 Confed'racies in vice, or leagues of pleasure;
 Ours has severest virtue for its basis,
 And such a friendship ends not but with life.

Marc. Portius, thou know'st my soul in all its weakness,
 Then pr'ythee spare me on its tender side.
 Indulge me but in love, my other passions
 Shall rise and fall by virtue's nicest rules.

Por. When love's well-tim'd, 'tis not a fault to love.
 The strong, the brave, the virtuous, and the wise,
 Sink in the soft captivity together.
 I would not urge thee to dismiss thy passion,
 (I know 'twere vain) but to suppress its force,
 Till better times may make it look more graceful.

Marc. Alas! thou talk'st like one who never felt
 Th' impatient throbs and longings of a soul.

That pants and reaches after distant good.
 A lover does not live by vulgar time :
 Believe me, Portius, in my Lucia's absence
 Life hangs upon me, and becomes a burden ;
 And yet, when I behold the charming maid,
 I'm ten times more undone ; while hope and fear,
 And grief, and rage, and love, rise up at once,
 And with variety of pain distract me.

Por. What can thy Portius do to give thee help ?

Marc. Portius, thou oft enjoy'st the fair-one's pre-
 Then undertake my cause, and plead it to her [sence ;
 With all the strength and heat of eloquence
 Fraternal love and friendship can inspire.
 Tell her thy brother languishes to death,
 And fades away, and withers in his bloom ;
 That he forgets his sleep, and loaths his food,
 That youth, and health, and war are joyless to him :
 Describe his anxious days, and restless nights,
 And all the torments that thou see'st me suffer.

Por. Marcus, I beg thee give me not an office
 That suits with me so ill. Thou know'st my temper.

Marc. Wilt thou behold me sinking in my woes,
 And wilt thou not reach out a friendly arm,
 To raise me from amidst this plunge of sorrows ?

Por. Marcus, thou can'st not ask what I'd refuse.
 But here, believe me, I've a thousand reasons——

Marc. I know thou'lt say my passion's out of season,
 That Cato's great example and misfortunes
 Should both conspire to drive it from my thoughts.
 But what's all this to one that loves like me ?
 Oh, Portius, Portius, from my soul I wish
 Thou didst but know thyself what 'tis to love !
 Then wouldst thou pity and assist thy brother.

Por. What should I do ! If I disclose my passion
 Our friendship's at an end ; if I conceal it,
 The world will call me false to a friend and brother.

[*Aside.*

Marc. But see where Lucia, at her wonted hour,
 Amid the cool of yon high marble arch,
 Enjoys the noon-day breeze ! Observe her, Portius ;
 That face, that shape, those eyes, that heav'n of beauty !
 Observe her well, and blame me if thou canst.

Por. She sees us, and advances——

Marc. I'll withdraw,
And leave you for a while. Remember, Portius,
Thy brother's life depends upon thy tongue. [*Exit.*

Enter Lucia.

Luc. Did not I see your brother Marcus here?
Why did he fly the place, and shun my presence?

Por. Oh, Lucia, language is too faint to shew
His rage of love; it preys upon his life;
He pines, he sickens, he despairs, he dies:
' His passions and his virtues lie confus'd,
' And mixt together in so wild a tumult,
' That the whole man is quite disfigur'd in him.
' Heav'n's! would one think 'twere possible for love
' To make such ravage in a noble soul!

Oh, Lucia! I'm distress'd; my heart bleeds for him:
Ev'n now, while thus I stand blest in thy presence,
A secret damp of grief comes o'er my thoughts,
And I'm unhappy, tho' thou smil'st upon me.

Luc. How wilt thou guard thy honour, in the shock
Of love and friendship? Think betimes, my Portius,
Think how the nuptial tie, that might ensure
Our mutual bliss, would raise to such a height
Thy brother's griefs, as might perhaps destroy him.

Por. Alas, poor youth! What dost thou think, my
His gen'rous, open, undefining heart [*Lucia?*
Has begg'd his rival to solicit for him;
Then do not strike him dead with a denial;
But hold him up in life, and cheer his soul
With the faint glimmering of a doubtful hope:
Perhaps when we have pass'd these gloomy hours,
And weather'd out the storm that beats upon us——

Luc. No, Portius, no; I see thy sister's tears,
Thy father's anguish, and thy brother's death,
In the pursuit of our ill-fated loves:
And, Portius, here I swear, to Heav'n I swear,
To Heav'n and all the powers that judge mankind,
Never to mix my plighted hands with thine,
While such a cloud of mischiefs hangs about us,
But to forget our loves, and drive thee out
From all my thoughts as far—as I am able.

Por.

Por. What hast thou said ! I'm thunder-struck—recall
Those hasty words, or I am lost for ever.

Luc. Has not the vow already pass'd my lips ?
The gods have heard it, and 'tis seal'd in Heav'n.
May all the vengeance that was ever pour'd
On perjur'd heads o'erwhelm me, if I break it.

Por. Fix'd in astonishment, I gaze upon thee,
Like one just blasted by a stroke from Heav'n,
Who pants for breath, and stiffens, yet alive,
In dreadful looks ; a monument of wrath !

' *Luc.* At length I've acted my severest part,
' I feel the woman breaking in upon me,
' And melt about my heart ; my tears will flow.
' But Oh, I'll think no more ! the hand of fate
' Has torn thee from me, and I must forget thee.

' *Por.* Hard-hearted, cruel maid !

' *Luc.* Oh, stop those sounds,
' Those killing sounds ! Why dost thou frown upon me ?
' My blood runs cold, my heart forgets to heave,
' And life itself goes out at thy displeasure.
' The gods forbid us to indulge our loves ;
' But Oh ! I cannot bear thy hate, and live.

' *Por.* Talk not of love, thou never knew'st its force.
' I've been deluded, led into a dream
' Of fancy'd bliss. Oh, Lucia, cruel maid !
' Thy dreadful vow, loaden with death, still sounds
' In my stunn'd ears. What shall I say or do ?
' Quick let us part ! Perdition's in thy presence,
' And horror dwells about thee !—Ha ! she faints !
' Wretch that I am, what has my rashness done !
' Lucia, thou injur'd innocence ! thou best
' And loveliest of thy sex ! awake, my Lucia,
' Or Portius rushes on his sword to join thee.
' —Her imprecations reach not to the tomb,
' They shut not out society in death—
' But ah ! she moves, life wanders up and down
' Through all her face, and lights up ev'ry charm.

' *Luc.* Oh, Portius, was this well—to frown on her
' That lives upon thy smiles ? To call in doubt
' The faith of one expiring at thy feet,
' That loves thee more than ever woman lov'd ?
' —What do I say ? My half-recover'd sense

' For-

' Forgets the vow in which my soul is bound.
 ' Destruction stands betwixt us ; we must part.
 ' *Por.* Name not the word, my frightened thoughts run
 ' And startle into madness at the sound. [back,

Luc. ' What wouldst thou have me do ? Consider well
 ' The train of ills our love would draw behind it.'
 Think, Portius, think thou seest thy dying brother
 Stabb'd at his heart, and all besmear'd with blood,
 Storming at Heav'n and thee ! Thy awful fire
 Sternly demands the cause, th' accursed cause
 That robs him of his son : poor Marcia trembles,
 Then tears her hair, and frantic in her griefs,
 Calls out on Lucia. What could Lucia answer,
 Or how stand up in such a scene of sorrow ?

Por. To my confusion, and eternal grief,
 I must approve the sentence that destroys me.
 ' The mist that hung about my mind, clears up ;
 ' And now, athwart the terrors that thy vow
 ' Has planted round thee, thou appear'st most fair,
 ' More amiable, and risest in thy charms.
 ' Loveliest of women ! Heav'n is in thy soul ;
 ' Beauty and virtue shine for ever round thee,
 ' Bright'ning each other : thou art all divine.'

Luc. Portius, no more ; thy words shoot thro' my heart,
 Melt my resolves, and turn me all to love.
 Why are those tears of fondness in thy eyes ?
 Why heaves thy heart ? Why swells thy soul with sorrow ?
 It softens me too much—farewel, my Portius ;
 Farewel, tho' death is in the word,—for ever !

Por. Stay, Lucia, stay ! What dost thou say ? For ever ?

Luc. Have I not sworn ? If, Portius, thy success
 Must throw thy brother on his fate, farewel—
 Oh, how shall I repeat the word ! for ever.

Por. ' Thus o'er the dying lamp th' unsteady flame
 ' Hangs quiv'ring on a point, leaps off by fits,
 ' And falls again, as loth to quit its hold.'
 —Thou must not go, my soul still hovers o'er thee,
 And can't get loose.

Luc. If the firm Portius shake
 To hear of parting, think what Lucia suffers !

Por. 'Tis true, unruffled and serene, I've met
 The common accidents of life, but here

Such

Such an unlook'd-for storm of ills falls on me,
It beats down all my strength. I cannot bear it.
We must not part.

Luc. What dost thou say? Not part!
Hast thou forgot the vow that I have made?
Are there not heav'ns, and gods, that thunder o'er us?
—But see, thy brother Marcus bends this way:
I sicken at the sight. Once more, farewell,
Farewel, and know thou wrong'st me, if thou think'st
Ever was love, or ever grief, like mine. [*Exit Lucia.*

Enter Marcus.

Marc. Portius, what hopes? How stands she? Am I
To life or death? [doom'd

Por. What wouldst thou have me say?

Marc. What means this pensive posture? Thou ap-
Like one amaz'd and terrify'd. [pear'st

Por. I've reason.

Marc. Thy down-cast looks, and thy disorder'd thoughts,
Tell me my fate. I ask not the success
My cause has found.

Por. I'm griev'd I undertook it.

Marc. What! does the barbarous maid insult my heart,
My aching heart, and triumph in my pains?
That I could cast her from my thoughts for ever!

Por. Away, you're too suspicious in your griefs;
Lucia, though sworn never to think of love,
Compassionates your pains, and pities you.

Marc. Compassionates my pains, and pities me!
What is compassion, when 'tis void of love?
Fool that I was to choose so cold a friend
To urge my cause! — Compassionates my pains!
Pr'ythee what art, what rhet'ric didst thou use
To gain this mighty boon? — She pities me!
To one that asks the warm returns of love,
Compassion's cruelty, 'tis scorn, 'tis death —

Por. Marcus, no more; have I deserv'd this treatment?

Mar. What have I said! Oh, Portius, Oh forgive me;
A soul exasperated in ills falls out
With ev'ry thing, its friend, itself—but hah!
What means that shout, big with the sounds of war?
What new alarm?

Por.

Por. A second, louder yet,
Swells in the winds, and comes more full upon us.

Mar. Oh, for some glorious cause to fall in battle!
Lucia, thou hast undone me; thy disdain
Has broke my heart: 'tis death must give me ease.

Por. Quick, let us hence. Who knows if Cato's life
Stands sure? Oh, Marcus, I am warm'd, my heart
Leaps at the trumpet's voice, and burns for glory.
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Sempronius, with the Leaders of the Mutiny.

Sem. At length the winds are rais'd, the storm blows
Be it your care, my friends, to keep it up [high,
In its full fury, and direct it right,
Till it has spent itself on Cato's head.
Mean while I'll herd among his friends, and seem
One of the number, that whate'er arrive,
My friends, and fellow-soldiers may be safe. [Exit.

1st Lead. We are all safe, Sempronius is our friend.
Sempronius is as brave a man as Cato.
But hark! he enters. Bear up boldly to him;
Be sure you beat him down, and bind him fast.
This day will end our toils, and give us rest:
Fear nothing, for Sempronius is our friend.
*Re-enter Sempronius, with Cato, Lucius, Portius, and
Marcus.*

Cato. Where are those bold intrepid sons of war,
That greatly turn their backs upon the foe,
And to their general send a brave defiance?

Sem. Curse on their dastard souls, they stand astonish'd.
[*Aside.*]

Cato. Perfidious men! And will you thus dishonour
Your past exploits, and fully all your wars?
Do you confess 'twas not a zeal for Rome,
Nor love of liberty, nor thirst of honour,
Drew you thus far; but hopes to share the spoil
Of conquer'd towns, and plunder'd provinces?
Fir'd with such motives, you do well to join
With Cato's foes, and follow Cæsar's banners.
Why did I 'scape th' envenom'd aspic's rage,
And all the fiery monsters of the desert,
To see this day? Why could not Cato fall
Without your guilt? Behold, ungrateful men,
Behold

Behold my bosom naked to you swords,
 And let the man that's injur'd strike the blow.
 Which of you all suspects that he is wrong'd,
 Or thinks he suffers greater ills than Cato?
 Am I distinguish'd from you but by toils,
 Superior toils, and heavier weight of cares?
 Painful pre-eminence!

Sem. By heav'ns they droop!

Confusion to the villains; all is lost.

[*Aside.*

Cato. Have you forgotten Libya's burning waste,
 Its barren rocks, parch'd earth, and hills of sand,
 Its tainted air, and all its broods of poison?
 Who was the first to explore th' untrodden path,
 When life was hazarded in ev'ry step?
 Or, fainting in the long laborious march,
 When on the banks of an unlook'd for stream
 You sunk the river with repeated draughts,
 Who was the last in all your host that thirsted?

Sem. If some penurious source by chance appear'd,
 Scanty of waters, when you scoop'd it dry,
 And offer'd the full helmet up to Cato,
 Did he not dash th' untasted moisture from him?
 Did he not lead you through the mid-day sun,
 And clouds of dust? Did not his temples glow
 In the same sultry winds, and scorching heats?

Cato. Hence, worthless men! hence! and complain
 You could not undergo the toil of war, [to Cæsar,
 Nor bear the hardships that your leader bore.

Luc. See, Cato, see the unhappy men; they weep!
 Fear and remorse, and sorrow for their crime,
 Appear in ev'ry look, and plead for mercy.

Cato. Learn to be honest men, give up your leaders,
 And pardon shall descend on all the rest.

Sem. Cato, commit these wretches to my care:
 First let 'em each be broken on the rack,
 Then, with what life remains, impal'd and left
 To writhe at leisure round the bloody stake,
 There let 'em hang, and taint the southern wind.
 The partners of their crime will learn obedience,
 When they look up and see their fellow traitors
 Stuck on a fork, and black'ning in the sun.

Luc.

‘ *Luc.* Sempronius, why, why wilt thou urge the fate
‘ Of wretched men ?

‘ *Sem.* How ! wouldst thou clear rebellion ?

‘ Lucius (good man) pities the poor offenders

‘ That would imbrue their hands in Cato’s blood.’

Cato. Forbear, Sempronius !—see they suffer death,
But in their deaths remember they are men ;
Strain not the laws to make their tortures grievous.
Lucius, the base degen’rate age requires
Severity, and justice in its rigour :

This awes an impious, bold, offending world,
Commands obedience, and gives force to laws.
When by just vengeance guilty mortals perish,
The gods behold the punishment with pleasure,
And lay th’ uplifted thunderbolt aside.

Sem. Cato, I execute thy will with pleasure.

Cato. Meanwhile we’ll sacrifice to liberty.

Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,
The gen’rous plan of pow’r deliver’d down
From age to age, by your renown’d forefathers,
(So dearly bought, the price of so much blood :)
Oh, let it never perish in your hands !
But piously transmit it to your children.
Do thou, great liberty, inspire our souls,
And make our lives in thy possession happy,
Or our deaths glorious in thy just defence.

[*Exeunt Cato, &c.*

1st Lead. Sempronius, you have acted like yourself.
One would have thought you had been half in earnest.

Sem. Villain, stand off, base, grov’ling, worthless
wretches,

Mongrels in faction, poor faint-hearted traitors !

2d Lead. Nay, now you carry it too far, Sempronius ;
Throw off the mask, there are none here but friends.

Sem. Know, villains, when such paltry slaves presume
To mix in treason, if the plot succeeds,
They’re thrown neglected by : but if it fails,
They’re sure to die like dogs, as you shall do.
Here, take these factious monsters, drag ’em forth
To sudden death.

1st Lead. Nay, since it comes to this—

E

Sem.

Sem. Dispatch 'em quick, but first pluck out their
tongues,
Lest with their dying breath they sow sedition.

[*Exeunt Guards, with their Leaders.*
Enter Syphax.

Sy. Our first design, my friend, has prov'd abortive :
Still there remains an after-game to play ;
My troops are mounted ; their Numidian steeds
Snuff up the wind, and long to scour the desert :
Let but Sempronius head us in our flight,
We'll force the gate where Marcus keeps his guard,
And hew down all that would oppose our passage.
A day will bring us into Cæsar's camp.

Sem. Confusion ! I have fail'd of half my purpose :
Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind !

Sy. How ! Will Sempronius turn a woman's slave ?

Sem. Think not thy friend can ever feel the soft
Unmanly warmth and tenderness of love.

Syphax, I long to clasp that haughty maid,
And bend her stubborn virtue to my passion :
When I have gone thus far, I'd cast her off.

Sy. Well said ! that's spoken like thyself, Sempronius.
What hinders, then, but that thou find her out,
And hurry her away by manly force.

Sem. But how to gain admission ? For access
Is given to none but Juba, and her brothers.

Sy. Thou shalt have Juba's dress, and Juba's guards,
The doors will open when Numidia's prince
Seems to appear before the slaves that watch them.

Sem. Heav'ns, what a thought is there ! Marcia's my
How will my bosom swell with anxious joy, [own !
When I behold her struggling in my arms,
With glowing beauty, and disorder'd charms,
While fear and anger, with alternate grace,
Pant in her breast, and vary in her face !
So Pluto seiz'd of Proserpine, convey'd
To Hell's tremendous gloom th'affrighted maid,
There grimly smil'd, pleas'd with the beauteous prize,
Nor envy'd Jove his sunshine and his skies. [*Exeunt.*

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T

A C T IV.

Enter Lucia and Marcia.

LUCIA.

NOW tell me, Marcia, tell me from thy soul,
 If thou believ'st 'tis possible for woman
 To suffer greater ills than Lucia suffers?

Mar. Oh, Lucia, Lucia, might my big swollen heart,
 Vent all its griefs, and give a loose to sorrow,
 Marcia could answer thee in sighs, keep pace
 With all thy wces, and count out tear for tear.

Luc. I know thou'rt doom'd alike to be belov'd
 By Juba, and thy father's friend Sempronius:
 But which of these has power to charm like Portius!

Mar. Still I must beg thee not to name Sempronius,
 Lucia, I like not that loud boist'rous man;
 Juba to all the brav'ry of a hero
 Adds softest love and more than female sweetness;
 Juba might make the proudest of our sex,
 Any of womankind, but Marcia, happy.

Luc. And why not, Marcia? Come, you strive in vain
 To hide your thoughts from one who knows too well
 The inward glowings of a heart in love.

Mar. While Cato lives, his daughter has no right
 To love or hate, but as his choice directs.

Luc. But should this father give you to Sempronius?

Mar. I dare not think he will: but if he should—
 Why wilt thou add to all the griefs I suffer
 Imaginary ills, and fancy'd tortures?
 I hear the sound of feet! They march this way!
 Let us retire, and try if we can drown
 Each softer thought in sense of present danger:
 When love once pleads admission to our hearts
 (In spite of all the virtue we can boast)

The woman that deliberates is lost. [*Excunt.*]

*Enter Sempronius, dressed like Juba, with Numidian
 Guards.*

Sem. The deer is lodg'd, I've track'd her to her covert.
 Be sure you mind the word, and when I give it
 Rush in at once, and seize upon your prey.
 Let not her cries or tears have force to move you.

—How will the young Numidian rave to see
 His mistress lost ! If ought could glad my soul,
 Beyond th' enjoyment of so bright a prize,
 'T would be to torture that young, gay barbarian.
 —But hark, what noise ! Death to my hopes ! 'tis he,
 'Tis Juba's self ! there is but one way left—
 He must be murder'd, and a passage cut
 Through those his guards—Hah, dastards, do you trem-
 ble !—

Or act like men, or by yon azure Heaven—

Enter Juba.

Jub. What do I see ? Who's this, that dares usurp
 The guards and habit of Numidia's prince ?

Sem. One that was born to scourge thy arrogance,
 Presumptuous youth !

Jub. What can this mean ? Sempronius !

Sem. My sword shall answer thee. Have at thy heart.

Jub. Nay, then beware thy own, proud, barbarous
 man. [*Sem. falls. His guards surrender.*]

Sem. Curse on my stars ! Am I then doom'd to fall
 By a boy's hand, disfigur'd in a vile
 Numidian dress, and for a worthless woman ?
 Gods, I'm distracted ! This my close of life !
 Oh, for a peal of thunder that would make
 Earth, sea, and air, and Heav'n, and Cato tremble ! [*Dies.*]

Jub. With what a spring his furious soul broke loose,
 And left the limbs still quiv'ring on the ground !
 Hence let us carry off those slaves to Cato,
 That we may there at length unravel all
 This dark design, this mystery of fate.

[*Exit Juba, with prisoners, &c.*]

Enter Lucia and Marcia.

Luc. Sure 'twas the clash of swords ; my troubled heart
 Is so cast down, and sunk amidst its sorrows,
 It throbs with fear, and aches at every sound.
 Oh, Marcia, should thy brothers, for my sake !—
 I die away with horror at the thought.

Marc. See, Lucia, see ! here's blood ! here's blood
 and murder !

Hah ! a Numidian ! Heav'n preserve the prince !
 The face lies muffled up within the garment,
 But, hah ! death to my sight ! a diadem,

And

And royal robes ! O Gods ! 'tis he, 'tis he !

' Juba, the loveliest youth that ever warm'd

' A virgin's heart,' Juba lies dead before us !

Luc. Now, Marcia, now call up to thy assistance
Thy wonted strength and constancy of mind,
Thou can'st not put it to a greater trial.

Marc. Lucia, look there, and wonder at my patience ;
Have I not cause to rave, and beat my breast,
To rend my heart with grief, and run distracted !

Luc. What can I think or say to give thee comfort ?

Marc. Talk not of comfort, 'tis for lighter ills :
Behold a sight that strikes all comfort dead.

Enter Juba listening.

I will indulge my sorrows, and give way
To all the pangs and fury of despair ;
That man, that best of men, deserv'd it from me.

Juba. What do I hear ? And was the false Sempronius
That best of men ? Oh, had I fall'n like him
And cou'd have thus been mourn'd, I had been happy.

' *Luc.* Here will I stand, companion in thy woes.
' And help thee with my tears ; when I behold
' A loss like thine, I half forget my own.'

Marc. 'Tis not in fate to ease my tortur'd breast.
' This empty world, to me a joyless desert,
' Has nothing left to make poor Marcia happy.

Juba. I'm on the rack ! Was he so near her heart ?

' *Marc.* Oh, he was all made up of love and charms !
' Whatever maid could wish, or man admire :
' Delight of every eye ; when he appear'd,
' A secret pleasure glad'ned all that saw him ;
' But when he talk'd, the proudest Roman blush'd
' To hear his virtues, and old age grew wise.

' *Juba.* I shall run mad——'

Marc. Oh, Juba ! Juba ! Juba !

Juba. What means that voice ? Did she not call on Juba ?

Marc. ' Why do I think on what he was ! he's dead !
' He's dead, and never knew how much I lov'd him.'
Lucia, who knows but his poor bleeding heart,
Amidst its agonies, remember'd Marcia,
And the last words he utter'd call'd me cruel !
Alas ! he knew not, hapless youth, he knew not
Marcia's whole soul was full of love and Juba !

Juba. Where am I ? Do I live ? or am indeed
What Marcia thinks ? All is Elyfium round me !

Marc. Ye dear remains of the most lov'd of men,
Nor modesty nor virtue here forbid
A last embrace, while thus——

Juba. See, Marcia, see [Throwing himself before her.
The happy Juba lives ! He lives to catch
That dear embrace, and to return it too
With mutual warmth and eagerness of love.

Marc. With pleasure and amaze I stand transported !
'Sure 'tis a dream ! dead and alive at once !'
If thou art Juba, who lies there ?

Juba. A wretch,
Disguis'd like Juba on a curst design.
'The tale is long, nor have I heard it out :
'Thy father knows it all.' I could not bear
To leave thee in the neighbourhood of death,
But flew, in all the haste of love, to find thee ;
I found thee weeping, and confess this once,
Am rapt with joy to see my Marcia's tears.

Marc. I've been surpris'd in an unguarded hour,
But must not now go back ; the love that lay
Half smother'd in my breast, has broke through all
Its weak restraints, and burns in its full lustre.
I cannot, if I would, conceal it from thee.

'*Juba.* I'm lost in extasy ; and dost thou love,
'Thou charming maid——

'*Marc.* And dost thou live to ask it ?

'*Juba.* This, this is life indeed ! life worth preserving,
'Such life as Juba never felt 'till now !

'*Marc.* Believe me, prince, before I thought thee dead,
'I did not know myself how much I lov'd thee.

'*Juba.* Oh, fortunate mistake !

'*Marc.* Oh, happy Marcia !

Juba. My joy, my best belov'd, my only wish !
How shall I speak the transport of my soul !

Marc. Lucia, thy arm. 'Oh, let me rest upon it !
'The vital blood, that had forsook my heart,
'Returns again in such tumultuous tides,
'It quite o'ercomes me.' Lead to my apartment.—
Oh, prince ! I blush to think what I have said,
But fate has wrested the confession from me ;

Go on, and prosper in the paths of honour.
Thy virtue will excuse my passion for thee,
And make the gods propitious to our love.

[*Exeunt Marc. and Luc.*]

Juba. I am so blest, I fear 'tis all a dream.
Fortune, thou now hast made amends for all
Thy past unkindness : I absolve my stars.
What tho' Numidia add her conquer'd towns
And provinces to swell the victor's triumph,
Juba will never at his fate repine :
Let Cæsar have the world, if Marcia's mine.

[*Exit.*]

A March at a distance.

Enter Cato and Lucius.

Luc. I stand astonish'd ! What, the bold Sempronius,
That still broke foremost thro' the crowd of patriots,
As with a hurricane of zeal transported,
And virtuous even to madness—

Cato. Trust me, Lucius,
Our civil discords have produc'd such crimes,
Such monstrous crimes, I am surpris'd at nothing.
—Oh, Lucius, I am sick of this bad world !
The day-light and the sun grow painful to me.

Enter Portius.

But see where Portius comes : what means this haste ?
Why are thy looks thus chang'd ?

Por. My heart is griev'd,
I bring such news as will afflict my father.

Cato. Has Cæsar shed more Roman blood ?

Por. Not so.

The traitor Syphax, as within the square
He exercis'd his troops, the signal given,
Flew off at once with his Numidian horse
To the south gate, where Marcus holds the watch ;
I saw, and call'd to stop him, but in vain :
He toss'd his arm aloft, and proudly told me,
He would not stay and perish like Sempronius.

Cato. Perfidious man ! But haste, my son, and see
Thy brother Marcus acts a Roman's part. [Exit Por.]
—Lucius, the torrent bears too hard upon me :
Justice gives way to force : the conquer'd world
Is Cæsar's ! Cato has no business in it.

Luc. While pride, oppression, and injustice reign,

The

The world will still demand her Cato's presence.
In pity to mankind submit to Cæsar,
And reconcile thy mighty soul to life.

Cato. Would Lucius have me live to swell the number
Of Cæsar's slaves, or by a base submission
Give up the cause of Rome, and own a tyrant?

Luc. The victor never will impose on Cato
Ungen'rous terms. His enemies confess
The virtues of humanity are Cæsar's.

Cato. Curse on his virtues! they've undone his country.
Such popular humanity is treason——
But see young Juba; the good youth appears,
Full of the guilt of his perfidious subjects!

Luc. Alas, poor prince! his fate deserves compassion.

Enter Juba.

Juba. I blush, and am confounded to appear
Before thy presence, Cato.

Cato. What's thy crime?

Juba. I'm a Numidian.

Cato. And a brave one, too. Thou hast a Roman soul.

Juba. Hast thou not heard of my false countrymen?

Cato. Alas, young prince! falsehood and fraud shoot up
in ev'ry soil,

The product of all climes—Rome has its Cæsars.

Juba. 'Tis generous thus to comfort the distress'd.

Cato. 'Tis just to give applause where 'tis deserv'd:
Thy virtue, prince, has stood the test of fortune,
Like purest gold, that, tortur'd in the furnace,
Comes out more bright, and brings forth all its weight.

Juba. What shall I answer thee? 'My ravish'd heart
'O'erflows with secret joy:' I'd rather gain
Thy praise, O Cato, than Numidia's empire.

Enter Portius.

Por. Misfortune on misfortune! grief on grief!
My brother Marcus——

Cato. Hah! what has he done?
Has he forsook his post? Has he giv'n way?
Did he look tamely on, and let 'em pass?

Por. Scarce had I left my father, but I met him
Borne on the shields of his surviving soldiers,
Breathless and pale, and cover'd o'er with wounds.
Long, at the head of his few faithful friends,

He

He stood the shock of a whole host of foes,
Till obstinately brave, and bent on death,
Opprest with multitudes, he greatly fell.

Cato. I'm satisfy'd.

Por. Nor did he fall before
His sword had pierc'd through the false heart of Syphax.
Yonder he lies. I saw the hoary traitor
Grin in the pangs of death, and bite the ground.

Cato. Thanks to the gods, my boy has done his duty.
—Portius, when I am dead, be sure you place
His urn near mine.

Por. Long may they keep asunder!

Luc. Oh, Cato, arm thy soul with all its patience;
See where the corpse of thy dead son approaches!
The citizens and senators, alarm'd,
Have gather'd round it, and attend it weeping.

Cato, meeting the corpse.

Cato. Welcome, my son! Here lay him down, my friends,
Full in my sight, that I may view at leisure
The bloody corse, and count those glorious wounds.
—How beautiful is death, when earn'd by virtue!
Who would not be that youth? What pity is it
That we can die but once to serve our country!
—Why fits this sadness on your brows, my friends?
I shou'd have blush'd if Cato's house had stood
Secure, and flourish'd in a civil war.
—Portius, behold thy brother, and remember
Thy life is not thy own, when Rome demands it.

Juba. Was ever man like this! *[Aside.]*

Cato. Alas, my friends,
Why mourn you thus! let not a private loss
Afflict your hearts. 'Tis Rome requires our tears,
The mistress of the world, the seat of empire,
The nurse of heroes, the delight of gods,
That humbled the proud tyrants of the earth,
And set the nations free, Rome is no more.
Oh, liberty! Oh, virtue! Oh, my country!

Juba. Behold that upright man! Rome fills his eyes
With tears, that flow'd not o'er his own dead son. *[Aside.]*

Cato. Whate'er the Roman virtue has subdu'd,
The sun's whole course, the day and year are Cæsar's;
For him the self-devoted Decii dy'd,

The

The Fabii fell, and the great Scipios conquer'd ;
 Ev'n Pompey fought for Cæsar. Oh, my friends
 How is the toil of fate, the work of ages,
 The Roman empire, fall'n ! Oh, curst ambition !
 Fall'n into Cæsar's hands ! Our great forefathers
 Had left him nought to conquer but his country.

Juba. While Cato lives Cæsar will blush to see
 Mankind enslav'd, and be ashamed of empire.

Cato. Cæsar ashamed ! Has he not seen Pharsalia !

Luc. Cato, 'tis time thou save thyself and us.

Cato. Lose not a thought on me, I'm out of danger,
 Heav'n will not leave me in the victor's hand.

Cæsar shall never say he conquer'd Cato.

But Oh, my friends, your safety fills my heart
 With anxious thoughts : a thousand secret terrors
 Rise in my soul. How shall I save my friends ?

'Tis now, O Cæsar, I begin to fear thee.

Luc. Cæsar has mercy if we ask it of him.

Cato. Then ask it, I conjure you ! let him know
 Whate'er was done against him, Cato did it.

Add, if you please, that I request it of him,

'That I myself, with tears, request it of him,'

The virtue of my friends may pass'd unpunish'd.

Juba, my heart is troubled for thy sake.

Shou'd I advise thee to regain Numidia,

Or seek the conqueror ?—

Juba. If I forsake thee

Whilst I have life, may Heav'n abandon Juba !

Cato. Thy virtues, prince, if I foresee aright,
 Will one day make thee great ; at Rome hereafter,
 'Twill be no crime to have been Cato's friend.

Portius, draw near : my son, thou oft hast seen

Thy fire engag'd in a corrupted state,

Wrestling with vice and faction : now thou see'st me

Spent, overpower'd, despairing of success ;

Let me advise thee to retreat betimes

To thy paternal seat, the Sabine field.

Where the great Censor toil'd with his own hands,

And all our frugal ancestors were bless'd

In humble virtues, and a rural life ;

There live retir'd, pray for the peace of Rome ;

Content thyself to be obscurely good.

When

When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,
The post of honour is a private station.

Por. I hope my father does not recommend
A life to Portius, that he scorns himself.

Cato. Farewel, my friends! If there be any of you
Who dare not trust the victor's clemency,
Know there are ships prepar'd by my command,
(Their sails already op'ning to the winds)
That shall convey you to the wish'd-for port.
Is there aught else, my friends, I can do for you?
The conqueror draws near. Once more farewel!
If e'er we meet hereafter, we shall meet
In happier climes, and on a safer shore,
Where Cæsar never shall approach us more.

[*Pointing to his dead son.*

There the brave youth, with love of virtue fir'd,
Who greatly in his country's cause expir'd,
Shall know he conquer'd. The firm patriot there,
Who made the welfare of mankind his care,
Tho' still by faction, vice, and fortune crost,
Shall find the gen'rous labour was not lost.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

*Cato solus, sitting in a thoughtful posture: in his hand Plato's
book on the Immortality of the Soul.*

A drawn sword on the table by him.

IT must be so—Plato, thou reason'st well—
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror,
Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis Heav'n itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untry'd being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass?

The

The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me;
 But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.
 Here will I hold. If there's a Power above
 (And that there is all nature cries aloud,
 Through all her works) he must delight in virtue;
 And that which he delights in must be happy.
 But when! or where—this world was made for Cæsar.
 I'm weary of conjectures—this must end 'em.

[Laying his hand on his sword]

Thus am I doubly arm'd: my death and life,
 My bane and antidote, are both before me.
 This in a moment brings me to an end;
 But this informs me I shall never die.
 The soul, secur'd in her existence, smiles
 At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
 The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
 Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years,
 But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
 Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
 The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.
 What means this heaviness that hangs upon me?
 This lethargy that creeps through all my senses?
 Nature oppress'd, and harass'd out with care,
 Sinks down to rest. This once I'll favour her,
 That my awaken'd soul may take her flight,
 Renew'd in all her strength, and fresh with life,
 An off'ring fit for Heav'n. Let guilt or fear
 Disturb man's rest, Cato knows neither of 'em,
 Indiff'rent in his choice to sleep or die.

Enter Portius.

Por. But, hah! how's this, my son? Why this intrusion?

Were not my orders that I would be private?
 Why am I disobey'd?

Por. Alas, my father!

What means this sword, this instrument of death?
 Let me convey it hence.

Cato. Rash youth, forbear!

Por. Oh, let the pray'rs, th' intreaties of your friends,
 Their tears, their common danger, wrest it from you!

Cato. Wouldst thou betray me? Wouldst thou give
 me up

A slave, a captive into Cæsar's hands?
Retire, and learn obedience to a father,
Or know, young man! —

Por. Look not thus sternly on me;
You know I'd rather die than disobey you.

Cato. 'Tis well! again I'm master of myself.
Now, Cæsar, let thy troops beset our gates,
And bar each avenue; thy gath'ring fleets
O'erspread the sea, and stop up ev'ry port;
Cato shall open to himself a passage,
And mock thy hopes——

Por. Oh, Sir! forgive your son,
Whose grief hangs heavy on him. Oh, my father!
How am I sure it is not the last time
I e'er shall call you so! Be not displeas'd,
Oh, be not angry with me whilst I weep,
And, in the anguish of my heart, beseech you
To quit the dreadful purpose of your soul!

Cato. Thou hast been ever good and dutiful.

[*Embracing him.*]

Weep not, my son, all will be well again;
The righteous gods, whom I have sought to please,
Will succour Cato, and preserve his children.

Por. Your words give comfort to my drooping heart.

Cato. Portius, thou may'st rely upon my conduct:
Thy father will not act what misbecomes him.
But go, my son, and see if aught be wanting
Among thy father's friends; see them embark'd,
And tell me if the winds and seas befriend them.
My soul is quite weigh'd down with care, and asks
The soft refreshment of a moment's sleep.

Por. My thoughts are more at ease, my heart revives.

[*Exit Cato.*]

Enter Marcia.

Oh, Marcia, Oh, my sister, still there's hope!
Our father will not cast away a life
So needful to us all, and to his country.
He is retir'd to rest, and seems to cherish
Thoughts full of peace. He has dispatch'd me hence
With orders that bespeak a mind compos'd,
And studious for the safety of his friends.

Marcia, take care that none disturb his slumbers. [*Exit.*]

Mar. Oh, ye immortal powers, that guard the just,
Watch round his couch, and soften his repose,
Banish his sorrows, and becalm his soul
With easy dreams; remember all his virtues!
And shew mankind that goodness is your care.

Enter Lucia.

Luc. Where is your father, Marcia, where is Cato?

Mar. Lucia, speak low, he is retir'd to rest.

Lucia. I feel a gentle dawning hope
Rise in my soul. We shall be happy still.

Luc. Alas! I tremble when I think on Cato!
In every view, in every thought, I tremble!
Cato is stern and awful as a god;
He knows not how to wink at human frailty,
Or pardon weakness that he never felt.

Mar. Though stern and awful to the foes of Rome,
He is all goodness, Lucia, always mild,
'Compassionate and gentle to his friends.
'Fill'd with domestic tenderness, the best,'
The kindest father I have ever found him,
Easy and good, and bounteous to my wishes.

Lucia. 'Tis his consent alone can make us blest'd,
Marcia, we both are equally involv'd
In the same intricate, perplex'd, distress.
The cruel hand of fate that has destroy'd
Thy brother Marcus, whom we both lament—

Mar. And ever shall lament, unhappy youth!

Lucia. Has set my soul at large, and now I stand
Loose of my vow. But who knows Cato's thoughts?
Who knows how yet he may dispose of Portius,
Or how he has determin'd of thyself?

Mar. Let him but live, commit the rest to Heav'n.

Enter Lucius.

Lucius. Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man!
Oh, Marcia, I have seen thy god-like father;
Some power invisible supports his soul,
And bears it up in all its wonted greatness.
A kind refreshing sleep is fall'n upon him:
I saw him stretch'd at ease, his fancy lost
In pleasing dreams; as I drew near his couch,
He smil'd, and cry'd, Cæsar, thou can'st not hurt me.

Mer.

Mar. His mind still labours with some dreadful thought.

* *Lucius.* Lucia, why all this grief, these floods of sorrow?

* Dry up thy tears, my child, we all are safe
* While Cato lives—his presence will protect us.*

Enter Juba.

Jub. Lucius, the horsemen are return'd from viewing
The number, strength, and posture of our foes,
Who now encamp within a short hour's march;
On the high point of yon bright western tower
We ken them from afar, the setting sun
Plays on their shining arms and burnish'd helmets,
And covers all the field with gleams of fire.

Lucius. Marcia, 'tis time we should awake thy father.
Cæsar is still dispos'd to give us terms,
And waits at distance 'till he hears from Cato.

Enter Portius.

Portius, thy looks speak somewhat of importance.
What tidings dost thou bring? Methinks I see
Unusual gladness sparkling in thy eyes.

Por. As I was hasting to the port, where now
My father's friends, impatient for a passage,
Accuse the ling'ring winds, a sail arriv'd
From Pompey's son, who through the realms of Spain
Calls out for vengeance on his father's death,
And rouses the whole nation up to arms.
Were Cato at their head, once more might Rome
Assert her rights, and claim her liberty.
But, hark! what means that groan! Oh, give me way,
And let me fly into my father's presence. [*Exit.*]

Lucius. Cato, amidst his slumbers, thinks on Rome,
And in the wild disorder of his soul
Mourns o'er his country. Hah! a second groan—
Heav'n guard us all!—

Mar. Alas! 'tis not the voice
Of one who sleeps; 'tis agonizing pain;
'Tis death is in that sound.—

Re-enter Portius.

Por. Oh, sight of woe!
Oh, Marcia, what we fear'd is come to pass!
Cato is fall'n upon his sword.—

Lucius. Oh, Portius,
Hide all the horrors of thy mournful tale,
And let us guess the rest.

Por. I've rais'd him up,
And plac'd him in his chair, where, pale and faint,
He gasps for breath, and as his life flows from him,
Demands to see his friends. His servants weeping,
Obsequious to his order, bear him hither.

Mar. Oh, heav'n! assist me in this dreadful hour,
To pay the last sad duties to my father.

' *Jub.* These are thy triumphs, thy exploits, Oh, Cæsar!

' *Lucius.* Now is Rome fall'n indeed!'

[Cato brought on in a chair.

Cato. Here set me down—

Portius, come near me—Are my friends embark'd?
Can any thing be thought of for their service?
Whilst I yet live, let me not live in vain.

—Oh, Lucius, art thou here?—Thou art too good—

Let this our friendship live between our children,
Make Portius happy in thy daughter Lucia.

Alas! poor man, he weeps!—Marcia, my daughter—

Oh, bend me forward!—Juba loves thee, Marcia.

A senator of Rome, while Rome surviv'd,

Would not have match'd his daughter with a king,

But Cæsar's arms have thrown down all distinction;

Whoe'er is brave and virtuous, is a Roman—

—I'm sick to death—Oh, when shall I get loose

From this vain world, th' abode of guilt and sorrow!—

—And yet, methinks, a beam of light breaks in

On my departing soul. Alas, I fear

I've been too hasty. Oh, ye Powers, that search

The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,

If I have done amiss, impute it not!—

The best may err, but you are good, and—Oh! [*Dies.*

Lucius. There fled the greatest soul that ever warm'd
A Roman breast; Oh, Cato! Oh, my friend!

Thy will shall be religiously observ'd.

But let us bear this awful corps to Cæsar,

And lay it in his sight, that it may stand

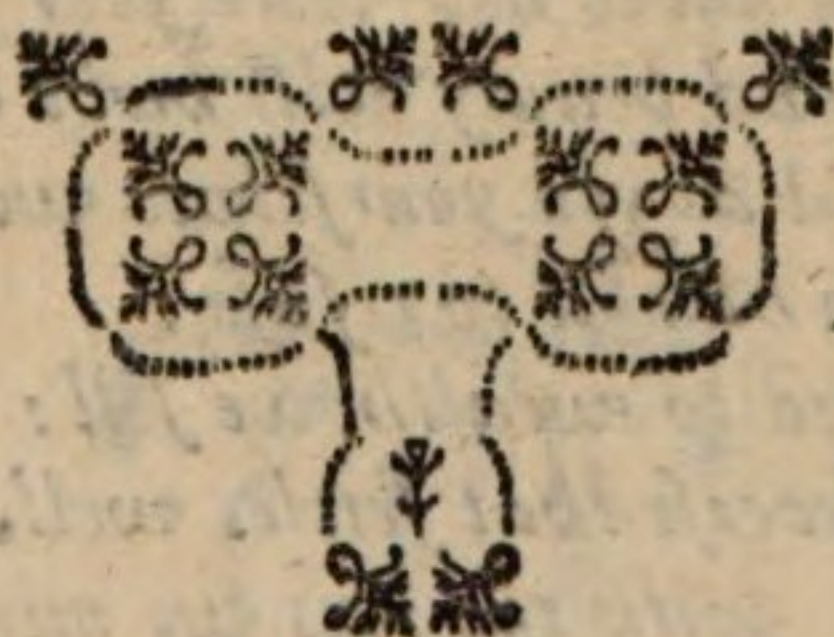
A fence betwixt us and the victor's wrath;

Cato, tho' dead, shall still protect his friends.

From

From hence, let fierce contending nations know
What dire effects from civil discord flow.
'Tis this that shakes our country with alarms,
And gives up Rome a prey to Roman arms,
Produces fraud, and cruelty, and strife,
And robs the guilty world of Cato's life. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

END of the FIFTH ACT.



(66)

E P I L O G U E.

Written by Dr. GARTH.

WHAT odd fantastic things we women do?
Who wou'd not listen when young lovers woo?
But die a maid, yet have the choice of two!
Ladies are often cruel to their cost:
To give you pain, themselves they punish most.
Vows of virginity should well be weigh'd;
Too oft they're cancell'd, tho' in convents made.
Wou'd you revenge such rash resolves—you may
Be spiteful — and believe the thing we say,
We hate you when you're easily said nay.
How needless, if you knew us, were your fears?
Let love have eyes, and beauty will have ears.
Our hearts are form'd as you yourselves would chuse,
Too proud to ask, too humble to refuse:
We give to merit, and to wealth we sell:
He sighs with most success that settles well.
The woes of wedlock with the joys we mix:
'Tis best repenting in a coach and six.

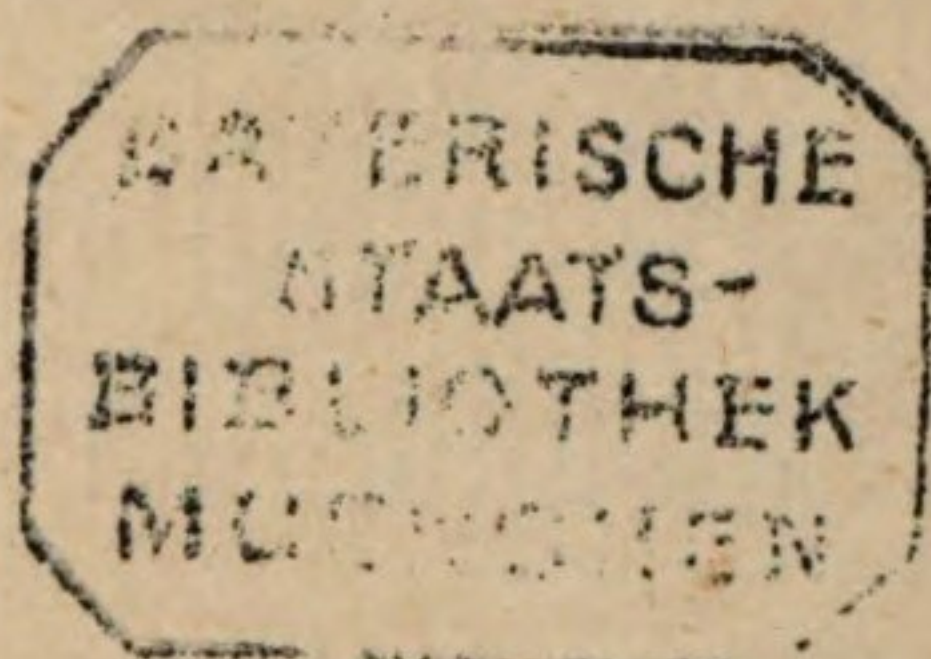
Blame not our conduct, since we but pursue
Those lively lessons we have learnt from you.
Your breasts no more the fire of beauty warms,
But wicked wealth usurps the pow'r of charms,
What pains to get the gaudy thing you hate,
To swell in show, and be a wretch in state.
At plays you ogle, at the ring you bow;
Ev'n churches are no sanctuaries now:
There golden idols all your vows receive,
She is no goddess that has nought to give.
Oh, may once more the happy age appear,
When words were artless, and the thoughts sincere;
When gold and grandeur were unenvy'd things,
And courts less coveted than groves and springs:
Love then shall only mourn when truth complains,
And constancy feel transport in its chains:

Sigs

(67)

E P I L O G U E.

*Sighs with success their own soft anguish tell,
And eyes shall utter what the lips conceal:
Virtue again to its bright station climb,
And beauty fear no enemy but time;
The fair shall listen to desert alone,
And ev'ry Lucia find a Cato's son.*



It is not possible to see from this
And yet that is what the
Form seems to be in the light of the
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form

The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form

The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form

The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form

The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form

The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form
The form itself is not a form

Bell, John / Jones, Henry / Rowe, Nicholas,

Bell's British theatre consisting of the most esteemed English plays

Bd.: 3

London 1776

P.o.angl. 431 w-3

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10750630-4